

A
Brief History
OF THE
UNITARIANS,
Called also
SOCINIANS.

In Four Letters,
Written to a Friend.

Acts 17. 11. *They searched the Scriptures
daily, whether those things were so?*



Printed in the Year 1687.



The First Letter,
Concerning the Unitarians,
vulgarly called Socinians.

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IN Answer to yours, demanding a brief account of the *Unitarians*, called also *Socinians*; their Doctrine concerning God (in which only they differ from other Christians, the *Remonstrants*, professedly agreeing with them in other points of Faith and Doctrine) and the Defence they usually make of their Heresy. They are called *Socinians*, from *F. Socinus*, an Italian Noble-Man, and a principal Writer of their Party. They affirm, God is only one Person, not three. They

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make our Lord Christ to be the Messenger, Minister, Servant, and Creature of God ; they confess he is also the Son of God, because he was begotten on blessed *Mary* by the Spirit or Power of God, *Luke* 1. 35. But they deny that he or any other Person but the *Father* (the God and Father of the said our Lord Christ) is God Almighty and Eternal. The Holy Ghost, or Spirit, according to them, is the Power and Inspiration of God, *Luke* 1. 35.

That the Lord Christ was a Man, the Son, Prophet, Messenger, Minister, Servant, and Creature of God ; not himself God, they think is proved by these (as they call them) Arguments.

1. If our Lord Christ were himself God, there could be no Person greater than he; none that might be called his Head, or his God; none that could in any respect command him. But the Holy Scriptures teach, that the *Father* is greater than Christ; is the Head, and the God of Christ; and gave Commandment to

to him, what he should say, and what he should do. *John 14. 28. My Father is greater than I. 1 Cor. 11. 3. The Head of Christ, is God. John 20. 17. I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God. John 12. 49. The Father which sent me, he gave me a Commandment, what I should say. John 14. 31. As the Father gave me Commandment, so do I.*

2. If our Lord Christ were indeed God, it could not without Blasphemy be (absolutely and without Restriction) affirmed of him, that he is the Creature, the Possession, the Servant, and Subject of God ; or that for his Obedience, he was rewarded and advanced by God. But the inspired Authors of Holy Scripture do say, that the Son our Lord Christ is the Creature of God, the Possession of God, the Servant of God ; was obedient to God, and for that cause by him rewarded and exalted ; also that when God shall have subjected all Men to his Son our Lord Christ, yet even the

shall he remain subject to God. Col. 1. 15. *The first-born (from the dead, ver. 18.) of every Creature.* Heb. 3. 1, 2. *Consider the Apostle and high Priest of our Profession Jesus Christ, who was faithful to him that appointed him.* In the Greek, and in the Margin of our Bibles, 'tis *faithful to him that made him.* 1 Cor. 3. 23. *Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.* Matth. 12. 17, 18. *That it might be fulfilled that was spoken by Isaias,—Behold my Servant!* Phil. 2. 8, 9. *He humbled himself, and became obedient, —Wherefore God hath highly exalted him; and given him a Name above every Name.* 1 Cor. 15. 28. *When all things shall be subdued to him, then shall the Son also be subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*

3. He that is true God, is not the Minister, or Priest of any other Person or Persons; he neither doth nor will (being himself Omnipotent and All-sufficient) mediate or intercede with any whomsoever, for his Servants and People. But 'tis certain that our
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Lord Christ is the Minister, and Mediator of God and Men; a Priest that appeareth in the Presence of God, and intercedeth with him for Men. *Heb.*

8. 6. Now hath he obtained a more excellent Ministry. *1 Tim.* 2. 5. There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Jesus Christ. *Heb.* 2. 17. A merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. *Heb.* 9. 24. Christ is not entred into the Holy place made with Hands, but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the Presence of God for us. *Heb.* 7. 25. He ever liveth to make Intercession for them.

4. Almighty God doth all things in his own Name, and by his own Authority; He ever doth his own Will, and seeketh his own Glory; he declares himself to be the prime Object of Faith and Worship; and pronounces all Doctrines or Religions to be vain, which proceed not from Him alone. But in our Lord Christ all things are contrary, for he declares, that he came

not into the World in his own Name or Authority ; not to do his own Will, or seek his own Glory, or propound himself as the principal Object of our Faith or Worship, or to publish a Doctrine of his own. *John 17. 28. I am not come of my self. John 5. 43. I am come in my Father's Name. John 8. 42. I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of my self, but he sent me. John 5. 30. I seek not my own Will. John 8. 50. I seek not my own Glory. John 12. 44. He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. Phil. 2. 11. That every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father. John 7. 16. My Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.*

§. God was always most wise, never ignorant of any thing : He needeth not the concurrence of any other Person, to assure him that he judgeth right. *He cannot* (saith St. James, chap. 1. ver. 13.) *be tempted.* And as he is infinitely great, so he is no less Good.

Good. But the sacred Writers do not speak of the Lord Christ after this Tenor. They say our Lord Christ increased in Wisdom; that he professed himself ignorant of some things; that he ascribed the Certainty and Infallibility of his Judgment to the Father's Presence with him; that he was *tried* by great Temptations, being thereto exposed by the Holy Ghost; that he refused to be called Good, because God only is Good. *Luke 2. 52. Jesus increased in Wisdom, —and in Favour with God and Men.* *Mark 13. 32. Of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man* (In the Greek tis, none knoweth) *no not the Angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.* *S. Matthew* (Mat. 24. 36.) adds, *But the Father only.* *John 11. 34. Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see.* *John 8. 16. My Judgment is true, for I am not alone; but I and the Father that sent me.* *Matth. 4. 1. Then was Jesus led of the Spirit, to be tempted of the Devil.* *Luke 18. 19. Why callest thou*

thou me good? there is none good save one, that is God.

6. God giveth what and to whom himself pleaseth ; he needs not the Aid of any other ; he entreateth not for himself or People ; he cannot die, and he deriveth his Power from none but himself. But 'tis certain that the Lord Christ could not himself, without the previous Ordination of the Father, confer the prime Dignities of Heaven, or of the Church. He placed his Safety in the Father's Presence and Help. He prayed often and fervently to the Father, both for himself and for his Disciples. He died, and was raised from the dead by the Father. After his Resurrection he received of another, that great Power which he now enjoyeth. *Matth. 20. 23. To sit on my right Hand, and on my left, is not mine to give; but [it shall be given] to them, for whom it is prepared of my Father. John 8. 29. He that sent me, is with me; and the Father hath not left me alone, for I always do those things that please him.*

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Luke 22. 42. *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me.* Heb. 5. 7. *Who in the Days of his Flesh offered up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears, unto him that was able to save him.* John 17. 20. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through their Word.* Ephes. 1. 19, 20. *According to the mighty working of his Power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.* Matth. 28. 18. *Jesus came and spake to them, saying, All Power is given to me.*

7. Jesus Christ is in holy Scripture always spoken of, as a distinct and different Person from God; and described to be the Son of God, and the Image of God: Rom. 16. 27. *To God only wise, be Glory through Jesus Christ.* Luke 18. 19. *Why callest thou me good? there is none good save one, that is God.* 1 Tim. 2. 5. *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Jesus Christ.* John 13. 18. *He that believeth not, is condemned already, because*
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he hath not believed on the Name of the only begotten Son of God. Luke 1. 35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee (Blessed Mary) and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also (or, and therefore) the Holything that is born of thee shall be called the Son of God. Col. 1. 15. The Image of the invisible God. 'Tis (say the Socinians) as impossible that the Son or Image of the one true God should himself be that one true God, as that the Son should be the Father, and the Image that very thing whose Image it is; which they take to be simply impossible, and contradictory to common sense, which Religion came not to destroy, but to improve.

Whereas to these arguings 'tis objected, that these things are in Holy Scripture spoken of Christ according to only his humane Nature, or as he is a Man; but that he is also God the Son, though united to an humane Nature, that is, to an humane Soul and Body. The Socinians reply, that there
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is in Scripture no real Foundation for such a Conceit; that 'tis inconsistent with almost all the Texts already cited, especially those in which the Lord Christ is spoken of as a distinct and different Person from God; and that there are many other Considerations and Passages of holy Scripture, which no less than *demonstrate* it to be false. As,

8. Because so many Texts expressly declare, that only the Father is God: John 17. 1, 2, 3. *Father, this is Life eternal, that they know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; or Jesus Christ thy Messenger.* 1 Cor. 8. 6. *But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him: and one Lord (or, Master, i. e. Teacher) by whom are all things.* In the Greek thus, *One Lord, Jesus Christ, for whom are all things, and we for him.* See the Note on Heb. 1. 2. in the Fourth Letter. Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6. *One Spirit, one Lord, one God and Father of all, who is above all.* 1 Cor. 15. 24. *Then cometh the End, when he*
(Christ,

(*Christ, ver. 23.*) *shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. Jam. 3. 9. Therewith (with the Tongue, ver. 8.) bless we God, even the Father. Rom. 15. 6. With one Mind, and with one Mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

9. If Christ were indeed God as well as Man, or (as *Trinitarians* speak) *God the Son* incarnate in an humane Nature ; it had been altogether superfluous to give the Holy Spirit to his said humane Nature, as a Director and Guide. For what other help could that Nature need, which was one Person with (as they speak) *God the Son* ; and in which *God the Son* did personally dwell ? *Luke 4. 1. Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, departed from Jordan. Acts 1. 2. After that he through the Holy Ghost (i. e. through direction and motion of the holy Spirit, and Inspiration of God) had given Commandments unto the Apostles. Acts 10. 38. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost.*

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10. Had the Lord Christ been (as *Trinitarians* speak) *God the Son* joyned to an humane Nature, he could not have ascribed his miraculous Works to the Holy Ghost, or to the Father, dwelling in him; but to the Son dwelling in him and united to him. *Matth. 12.*

28. *I cast out Devils by the Spirit of God.* *John 14. 10. The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the Works.* *John 5. 30. I can do nothing of my self.* *Acts 2. 22. Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you, by Miracles, and Wonders, and Signs, which God did by him in the midst of you.*

11. Had our Lord been more than a Man, the Prophecies of the Old Testament in which he is promised, would not describe him *barely* as the Seed of the Woman; the Seed of *Abraham*; a Prophet like unto *Moses*; the Servant and Missionary of God, on whom God's Spirit should rest. *Gen. 3. 5. I will put Enmity between thy Seed and her Seed. Her Seed is by all Interpreters understood to be Christ.* *Gen. 22. 18. In thy*

thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed. This again is universally interpreted of Christ. *Deut. 18. 18. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their Brethren, like unto thee ; and I will put my Words into his Mouth.* This is interpreted of our Lord Christ in many Texts of the New Testament, as *John 1. 45.* and *Acts 3. 22.* and *Acts 7. 37.* *Isai. 41. 1. Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect in whom my Soul delighteth ; I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth Judgment to the Gentiles.* This is interpreted of Christ, *Matth. 12. 17, 18.*

Now that the Holy Ghost or Spirit is only the Power and Inspiration of God, at least is not himself God, they hold is ascertained by these Considerations.

1. The Holy Ghost or Spirit, and the Power of God, are spoken of, as one and the same thing. *1 Cor. 2. 4, 5. My preaching was not with enticing Words of Mans Wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of Power ; that your Faith*

Faith should not stand in the Wisdom of Men, but in the Power of God. Luke 1. 35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee (Blessed Mary) and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Luke 11. 20. I with the Finger of God (that is, by the Power of God, Exod. 8. 19.) cast out Devils. Mat. 12. 28. I cast out Devils by the Spirit of God. Compare also Luke 24. 49. with Acts 1. 4, 5, 8.

2. A manifest Distinction is made, as between God and Christ, so also between God and the Holy Spirit, or Power and Inspiration of God ; so that 'tis impossible the Spirit should be God himself. *Rom. 5. 5. The Love of God is shed abroad in your Hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. 1 Cor. 3. 16. The Grace (or Favour) of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you. Rom. 8. 27. He (the Spirit, v. 26.) maketh Intercession for the Saints, according to the Will of God. They note here, that God's Spirit or Inspiration (being designed to be a continual*

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Director and Guide to the Faithful) it is spoken of, in these and some other Texts, as a Person; by the same *Figure of Speech* that Charity is described as a Person, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5. and Wisdom, Prov. 9. 11. and the Law or Commandments of God, Psal. 119. 24. They note also that in some Texts 'tis called the *Holy Ghost*, and *Holy Spirit*: in the same sense that we commonly say the *Holy Wisdom*, *Holy Will* of God.

3. The Spirit is obtained for us of God, by our Prayers; therefore it self is not God. *Acts 15. 8. God which knoweth the Hearts, bare them witness; giving them the Holy Spirit as he did to us.* Luke 11. 13. *How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.* If we say, these Texts are to be understood, not of the Person of the Holy Ghost, but of his Gifts and Graces; the *Socinians* readily confess it, but they say also, that if the Holy Spirit were at all a Person, much more a God, his Gifts and Graces would be bestowed by him-

himself, and asked of himself, not bestowed by, and asked of another Person; as 'tis manifest (and by all confessed) they are in these Texts. They add, there is neither Precept nor Example in all Holy Scripture, of Prayer made to the Spirit, on this or any other occasion: which (on the Trinitarian Supposition) that the Holy Spirit is a Person and God, no less than the Father, is very surprizing, nay utterly unaccountable.

4. If the Holy Spirit, and our Lord Christ, are Gods or God, no less than the Father; then God is a Trinity of Persons, or three Persons: but this is contrary to the whole Scripture, which speaks of God as but one Person; and speaks of him and to him by singular Pronouns, such as *I, Thou, Me, Him, &c.* *Job 13. 7. Will ye speak wickedly for God? — Will ye accept his Person?* *Heb. 1. 1. God — hath in these last times spoken to us by his Son, — who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person, — sat down at the*
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right Hand of the Majesty on high.
 Deut. 6. 4, 5. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord
 our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love
 the Lord thy God with all thine Heart.*
 In the Hebrew thus, *O Israel, hearken
 to Jehovah our God: Jehovah is one,*
and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God
with all thine Heart. The *Jews* by a
 most ancient Tradition and Custom,
 are obliged to repeat this Verse every
 Morning and Evening, to keep it in
 perpetual Memory, that Jehovah, or
 God, is one only, not two or three.
*Isa. 45. 5. I am the Lord, —there is
 no God but Me. Psal. 102. 25. O my
 God, —of old hast thou laid the Founda-
 tion of the Earth. Matth. 4. 10. —the
 Lord thy God, him only shalt thou serve.*
 No Instance (say the Socinians) can be
 given in any Language of *three Persons*,
 whoever spoke of themselves, or were
 spoken to, by the singular Pronouns, *I,*
Thou, Me, Him, Thee, &c. Such speak-
 ing is contrary to Custom, Grammar,
 and Sense, which are the Laws of
 Speech: therefore the Holy Scriptures
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always speaking thus of God, either he is only *one Person*; or the Scriptures are one continued ungrammatical Solœcism and Impropriety, and that in the capital Article of Faith, which no reasonable or good Man can or ever will allow. For it no way helps the *Trinitarians*, that God (according to some Translations) says at *Gen. 1. 26. Let Us make Man*. Because nothing is so usual in common Speech, as for single Persons to speak of themselves, indifferently by singular or plural Pronouns; thus *2 Cor. 10. 2. I think to be bold against some, who think of Us*, (saith *Paul* of himself only) *as if We walked according to the Flesh*. Briefly, they contend that when God speaks of himself in the plural Number, or by plural Pronouns, (which yet some deny he ever does; and if he doth, 'tis not above once or twice in the whole Scripture) he speaks according to the Custom of single Persons, especially Princes and great Persons, in all Nations and Languages: but were Almighty

God *three* Persons, they could *never* speak of themselves, or be spoken to, by the singular Pronouns, *I, Thou, Thee, Him, Me*; because 'tis contrary not only to Grammar, (which is always to be observed, when there is no Custom to the contrary) but to the Custom of all Nations which understand to speak intelligibly and sensibly.

5. Had the Son, or Holy Ghost, been God, this would not have been omitted in the Apostles Creed. This Creed (say they) which is of next, if not equal Authority to any part of Holy Scripture, after having declared that God is *the Father Almighty*, and Maker of Heaven and Earth; speaks not a Word of the Godhead of the Son, or Holy Ghost. It describes the Son by all the characters of a Man, and by such only; it says, he was conceived or begotten by the Holy Ghost on Blessed *Mary*, that accordingly he was born of her; that he was crucified, died, and was buried; that he rose on the third day, and ascended into Heaven: all these are the

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Descriptions of a Man: for God cannot be conceived, or be born, or die, nor ascend into Heaven, for he is always there. Not content to take no notice that he is God, this Creed distinguishes him very plainly from God, (that is, denies him to be God) by adding, *He sits at the right Hand of God.* i.e. He is advanced to be next to God, and is under the immediate and particular Protection of God. Concerning the Holy Ghost, this Creed says no higher thing than it says of the Church, I believe *in the Holy Ghost*, and *in the Holy Catholick Church*. For in the Greek, the same Preposition *in*, is before both alike; and so also is this Creed recited by St. Cyril, and by St. Cyprian *ad Numid.* and by *Socrates Hist.* l. i. c. 26. If the Compilers of this Creed had believed, that either the Son or Spirit is God; tis unaccountable that they should take no notice of it in a Creed, and such a Creed as was purposely drawn up to represent all the necessary Articles of Religion. If a So-

cinian (say they) were to draw up a Confession of his Faith, he would do it in no other Words, but these of the Apostles; and on the contrary, -no *Trinitarian*, after having described *the Father*, by all the usual Characters of God, (saying, he is *God, Almighty, and Maker of Heaven and Earth*) would fail to mention the Divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit; whence we must needs infer, that the Apostles believed as the *Socinians*, not as the *Trinitarians* believe concerning God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

6. To conclude; Theirs (they say) is an accountable and a reasonable Faith; but that of the *Trinitarians* is absurd, and contrary both to Reason and *to it self*, and therefore not only false, but *impossible*. For you (say they) teach, there are three almighty, and most wise Persons, and yet but one God; as if every *Almighty and most wise Person* were not a God, and consequently three such Persons, three Gods. You add yet more absurdly, that there

there are three Persons who are *severally and each of them true God*, and yet there is but one true God: This is an *Error in counting* or numbring; which when stood in, is of all others the most brutal and inexcusable; and not to discern it, is not to be a Man. But we would not (say they) trouble our selves at the non-sense of this Doctrine, if it did not impose false Gods on us; by advancing two to be Gods, who are not so: and rob also the one true God of the Honour due to him, and of which he is jealous.

This, Sir, is the Doctrine of the *Unitarians*, more commonly by others call'd *Socinians*, concerning Almighty God; and these their Arguments; which I have so related as not to judg or rail of their Persons, because however learned and reasonable Men (which is their Character among their worst Adversaries) may be argued out of their Errors, yet few will be swagger'd or chode out of them. It remains, that I make a brief and fair Deduction
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of their History ; from the time that they have been taken notice of in the World.

They whom we call *Socinians*, were by the Fathers and first Ages of Christianity called *Nazarens* ; by which name *St. Paul* is accused before *Felix*, *Acts* 24. 5. They were also in those first times called *Ebionites*, *Mineans*, *Artemonites*, *Theodotians*, *Symmachiens*, *Paulinists*, *Samosatensians*, *Photinians*, and *Monarchians*. The Writings of these Ancients are all lost, being destroyed by the *Arians* and *Catholicks* : Notwithstanding they had (I find) some very considerable Men among them ; as, 1. *Theodotian*, who translated the Old Testament out of the Hebrew into Greek, about the Year of our Lord 182. 2. *Symmachus*, who published another Translation from the Hebrew also into Greek, in the Year 193. *Eusebius* assures us, both these were *Ebionites* or *Nazarens* ; and their Translations were greatly esteemed, and much used in the Greek Churches.

ches. 3. *Paulus of Samosatum*, Bishop and Patriarch of *Antioch*; a Man not only learned and eloquent, but so much esteemed in that Capital City of the *East*, that an Episcopal Council there assembled, were not of sufficient Authority with his Citizens, to cast him out of *St. Peter's Chair*. 4. *Photinus* Bishop of *Sirmium*, against whom other Bishops being by Imperial Authority assembled, proceeded by Conciliary Acts and Censures of the Church; but neither would his City part with him, till the Emperour sent an Army to expel him.

Eusebius (*Hist. l. 5. c. 28.*) and *Theodoret* (*Har. Fab. l. 2. c. de Artem.*) say, that these *Nazarens* constantly affirmed, that they derived their Doctrine from the Apostles of our Lord; and that it was the general Doctrine of the Church, till the Popes, *Victor* and *Zephyrin*, set themselves to root it up. *Victor* (say the *Socinians*) began to persecute the Apostolick Doctrine of one God, or (what is the same) that God is

is one, in the Year 194 ; but with little Success, till that which was afterwards the Doctrine of the *Arians* grew into general Credit and Acceptance. For *Justin Martyr*, *Origen*, and other principal Fathers teaching (as the *Arians* afterwards did) that *the Father* is indeed before the Son and Holy Spirit, *in Time, in Dignity, and in Power*, yet that *the Word*, or Son, who in the fulness of time took our nature on him, was generated or created sometime before the World, and was the Father's Servant and Minister in making the World ; and that the Holy Ghost was the Creature of the Son, and subservient to him in making all things : this Doctrine being advanced by *Justin*, *Origen*, and others of note in the Church ; and seeming *more for the Honour of the Son*, than the plain and simple Doctrine of the *Nazarens*, by the Help of Persecution prevailed against theirs, and became the more current Doctrine of the Church, till in the Council of *Nice* it was

was condemned, and another *more popular* (and so more taking) *than that* (as attributing to the Son, Eternity, and Equality with the Father) did generally obtain, being supported by Imperial Authority. But did Superstition (say the *Socinians*) stop here? No, for there shortly arose another Doctrine, that the Son and Holy Spirit are the same God with the Father, not only (as the Nicene Fathers explained this matter) by Unity of Wills, and specifical Identity or sameness of Substance, but by numerical or true Identity and sameness of Substance and Nature. This last has been establish'd by so many terrible penal Laws, partly obtained of the Roman Emperours by Catholick Bishops; partly made by Popes in the times of their Omnipotence; that now not only the *Nazaren* Faith, but the *Arian* and the *Nicene* (truly so called) are no where openly profess'd in the Territories of Christian Princes and States; except in a few Cities of *Transilvania*, and some

some Churches of the United Netherlands, in which Countries Liberty of Conscience makes a part of their Civil Rights and Franchises. But in the Turkish and other Mahometan and Pagan Dominions, where also the conquered Provinces of Christians have Liberty of Conscience, the Nazaren and Arian Churches are very numerous. Much of the new Conquests of his present Imperial Majesty, in *Hungaria*, *Sclavonia*, and *Illyricum*, are *Arian*.

But though the open and avowed Profession of the Unity of God (as 'tis taught by the *Nazarens*, or *Socinians*, and by the *Arians*) be suppress'd ; yet 'tis observed that not a few of the most learned and celebrated Writers of the Church, whether Catholick or Reformed, have certainly been either *Arians* or *Socinians*, or great Favourers of them ; though they have used much Caution in so expressing themselves, as not to lye too open to Exception, Envy, or a legal Prosecution.

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1. *D. Erasmus*, the restorer of Learning, hath given occasion both to his Friends and Enemies to think him an *Arian*. He saith, that *Phil. 2. 6.* was the principal Argument of the Fathers against the *Arians*; but that to say true, it proves nothing against them. He notes on *Eph. 5. 5.* that the word *God* being used absolutely, doth in the Apostolick Writings always signify the Father. In his *Scholia* on the third Tome of *St. Jerom's* Epistles, he denies that the *Arians* were Hereticks; he adds, farther, that they were superior to our Men in Learning and Eloquence. 'Tis believed, *Erasmus* did not make himself a party to that which he esteemed the ignorant and dull side of the Question. In his Epistle to *Bilibaldus*, he speaks as openly as the times would permit a wise Man to speak, I (saith *Erasmus*) could be of the *Arian* Perswasion, if the Church approved it.

2. *H. Grotius* is Socinian all over. This great Man in his younger Years
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attacked the Socinians in a principal Article of their Doctrine: But being answered by *J. Crellius*, he not only never replied, but thank'd *Crellius* for his Answer; and afterwards publishing some Annotations on the Bible, he interpreted the whole according to the mind of the *Socinians*. There is nothing in all his Annotations, which they do not approve and applaud. His Annotations are a compleat System of Socinianism, not excepting his Notes on *John* I. 1, &c. which are written so artificially, and interwove with so many different Quotations, that he has cover'd himself, and his sense of that Portion of Scripture, from such as do not read him carefully.

3. *D. Petavius*, the most Learned of the Jesuits, has granted that generally the Fathers who lived before the Nicene Council, and whose Writings are preserved, agreed in their Doctrine concerning God with the *Nazarens* or *Socinians*, and concerning the Son our Lord Christ, and the Holy Spirit with
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the *Arians*. For 'tis to be noted that the *Arians* and *Socinians* agree in their Doctrine concerning God, that he is only one Person, the God and Father of our Lord Christ; but they differ concerning the Son and Holy Spirit. The Son, according to the *Arians*, was generated or created some time before the World, and in process of time, for great and necessary causes, became incarnate in our Nature: The Holy Ghost (they say) is the Creature of the Son, and subservient to him in the Work of Creation. But the *Socinians* deny, that the Son our Lord Christ had any Existence before he was born of Blessed *Mary*, being conceived in her by the holy Spirit of God: They say, the Spirit is the Power and Inspiration of God, saving that Mr. *Biddle*, and those that follow him, take the holy Spirit to be a Person, chief of the Heavenly Spirits, prime Minister of God and Christ, and therefore called the Spirit by way of excellence; and the Holy Spirit, to discriminate him

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from Satan, Prince and Chief of the wicked and Apostate Spirits. This difference notwithstanding, because they agree in the principal Article, that there is but *one God*, or but one who is God, both parties (*Socinians* and *Arians*) are called *Unitarians*, and esteem of one another as Christians and true Believers, as may be seen on the part of the *Arians* in their Historian *Chr. Sandius*; (Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. de *Paul. Semosat.*) and for the *Socinians* in the Disputation of *Alba*. But to return to *Petavius*, He often affirms, that the Doctrine of the Trinity, and of the Divinity of the Son and Spirit, cannot be proved by Scripture only; and that those who have attempted it, have always been baffled. He adds, there is no way to Unity in the Church about these matters, but by contenting our selves to speak concerning them, as the Fathers who lived *nearest to the Apostles time* did speak.

4. *S. Episcopus*, so much esteemed by our English Divines, seems to have been

been an *Arian*. He saith, the Father is so first, as to be first in order (*i. e. time*) in Dignity and in Power. He saith, that to make three equal Persons in God or in the Godhead, is to make three Gods. He denies, that the Lord Christ is the Son of God by substantial Generation, that is, by Generation from the Father's Substance or Essence. Speaking of the Creeds that express the Catholick Doctrine of the Trinity, and the Divinity of the Son and Spirit, he saith, that Bishops in general Councils being led by Fury, Faction, and Madness, did not so much compose as huddle up Creeds for the Church: See for these things *Episc. Inst. Theol.* l. 4 c. 32, 33, 34.

5. *G. Sandius*, a Gentleman of prodigious Industry and Reading, and no less ingenious then learned, in all his Books refuses *in Words* to be called either *Arian* or *Socinian*; but has written an Ecclesiastical History in Quarto, with *Addenda* to it *Colonia* 1678, on purpose to prove that all Antiquity

was *Arian*; and that the *Unitarian Doctrine* has been reduced so low by the Persecutions of *Rome*, and the puissant Arms of *Charles* the Great, and other Kings of *France*, for which Services they have been requited by the Roman Pontiff. with the Titles of *Most Christian Kings*, and *Eldest Sons* of the Church. He has also (under the borrowed Name of *Cingallus*) written a small Treatise with this Title, *Scriptura Trinitatis Revelatrix*; here under pretence of asserting the Trinity, he has (as much as he could) defeated all the strengths of the *Catholick Cause*; and shews that there is no considerable Text objected to the *Arians* or *Socinians*, but is given up as an incompetent and insignificant proof, by some or other of the principal Critics and Authors, who were themselves *Trinitarians*; so that among them they have given away the Victory to their Adversaries.

But, Sir, I perceive I have drawn out this account of the *Socinians*, to already
ready

ready a sufficient length for a Letter; I will therefore conclude with a Passage out of Dr. Burnet's second Book of the History of the Reformation abridged. George van Parr, a Dutch Man, refused to abjure; so he was burnt in the year 1549, (*by virtue of a Law or Writ since abolished by Act of Parliament*) for affirming, that *only the Father is God*, and denying the Divinity of the Son our Lord Christ. He had led a very exemplary Life, for Fasting, Devotion and a good Conversation; and suffered with extraordinary Composedness of Mind. These things cast a great Blemish on the Reformers: It was said, they only condemned Cruelty, when acted on themselves; but were ready to practise it when they had Power. The Papists made great use of this in the next (Queen Mary's) Reign; and what Arch-Bishop Cranmer and Bishop Ridley (*Authors of Van Parrs Punishment*) suffered in her time, was thought a just Retaliation on them by that wise

(38)

Providence, which disposes all things
justly to all Men. Thus far Dr. Bur-
net.

S I R,

I am most sincerely

Yours.

A

A
Second Letter
TO A
FRIEND,
Concerning the
UNITARIANS,
Called also
SOCINIANS.

Containing the Texts objected to
them out of the Old Testament,
and their Answers,

*Acts 24. 14. After the way which they call
Herefy, so worship I the God of my Fathers,
believing all things that are written in the
Law and the Prophets.*

Printed in the Year 1687.



A Second Letter, Concerning the Unitarians, *vulgarly called Socinians.*

S I R,

THE Texts and Arguments from them, objected to the Doctrine of the *Unitarians* and *Socinians* concerning God, are so many; that 'tis impossible to give a tolerable account of what they answer to the Orthodox, *in a Letter*; their Answers would indeed require a Volume. Yet because I would not wholly disappoint your Expectations and Demands, I will *in several Letters* lay before you some part of what they reply to the Texts and Arguments taken from the
Old

Old Testament; what to those that are found in the Gospels and Acts; what to those out of the Epistles and Revelation.

The Texts objected to them out of the Old Testament, are of two sorts. 1. Those which singly and alone prove the Trinity, or the Divinity of the Son or Spirit. 2. Those which perhaps would not, if alone considered, prove the Orthodox Doctrine; but do it sufficiently when compared *with*, and interpreted *by* some Texts of the New Testament. I will propound both these in the order of Scripture.

1. *Gen. 1. 26. Let Us make Man in our Image.* Answ. (1.) This Text hath been considered in the foregoing Letter. (2.) But 'tis to be also farther observed, that some Rabbies render the Original Hebrew thus, *Let Man be made in our Image.* Meaning (say they) in the Likeness of God and Angels: for he speaketh to the Angels who were all present: *Job. 38. 4. 7.* Yet God speaketh to them, not as Adjutants,

jutants, but as Spectators of his Work. They note, that this Translation agreeth with the stile used all along in this chapter; *ver. 3. Let there be Light. ver. 6. Let there be a Firmament. ver. 20. Let the Waters bring forth. ver. 24. Let the Earth bring forth the living Creature.*

2. *Gen. 3. 22. God said, The Man is become as one of Us, to know Good and Evil.* Answ. (1.) It may be (and is by very many learned Men) said, that God speaketh here to the Angels. (2.) But others translate the Hebrew words thus, the Man is become one of himself, knowing Good and Evil. And thus also 'tis expressed in the *Chaldee* Translation by *Onkelos*.

3. *Gen. 11. 6, 7. The Lord said, Let Us go down, and there confound their Language.* Answ. (1.) It is said by some, that God speaketh here to the Angels, and the Ministers and Executors of his Decree. (2.) Others say, Let their Language be confounded (for so the Hebrew may be rendred) is an
Hebrew

Hebrew Phrase, signifying, *I will confound their Language.* For so he saith, *Gen. 1. 3, 6, 20, 24, 26. Let there be Light. Let there be a Firmament. Let the Waters, Let the Earth bring forth. Let Man be made: that is, I will make Light; I will make a Firmament, I will cause the Waters and Earth to bring forth; I will make Man.* Note that God is said to go down, because his Power accompanied his Angels, who were either Ministers, or Spectators of his miraculous Work.

4. *Gen. 19. 24. The Lord (Heb. Jehovah) rained Fire from the Lord (Heb. Jehovah) out of Heaven.* Answ. The Translation of *Seb. Castalis* is generally approved, by the most learned Critics, as agreeing to the Genius and manner of the Hebrew Tongue, he renders the original Words thus, *Jehovah rained Fire from himself from Heaven.* But see also what they say on *Zech. 3. 2.* a place parallel to this.

5. *2 Sam. 23. 2, 3. The Spirit of God spake by me;--the God of Israel said.* Answ. The

The Spirit of God, that is, the Inspiration of God ; *q. d.* God inspired, and spake by me.

6. *Psal. 2. 7. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* *Answ.* Paul hath taught us that this Text so far forth as it respecteth Christ, and is a Prophecy of him, and what God would do for him, was not intended of his (supposed) eternal Generation from the Essence of the Father or God ; but of his being begotten to Life again from the dead. *Acts 13. 34. God hath fulfilled the same, — in that he raised up Jesus from the dead ; as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* *Col. 1. 18. The Head of the Body the Church, the first born from the dead.*

7. *Psal. 45. 6, 7. Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever, — thou hast loved Righteousness, — therefore thy God hath anointed thee with the Oyl of Gladness above thy Fellows.* These Words are interpreted of Christ by the Author to the Hebrews ; *Heb. 1. 8, 9. Unto the*
the

the Son, he saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever, &c. Answ. In the Hebrew and in the Greek 'tis, God is thy Throne (i. e. thy Seat, resting-place, or Establishment) for ever.

8. Psal. 68. 18. *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led Captivity captive, thou hast received Gifts for Men; or (as 'tis in the Syriac, and Eph. 4. 8.) hast given Gifts to Men. These Words manifestly spoken of God, are interpreted of Christ; Eph. 4. 8, 9, 11; Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led Captivity captive, and gave Gifts to Men. (Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the Earth? He that descended, is the same also that ascended up far above all Heavens, that he might fill all things) And he gave some Apostles; some Prophets; and some Evangelists, &c. Answ. (1.) Those Words, descended first into the lower parts of the Earth; are to be understood of our Lord's descent into the Grave and Hell, from whence he a-*
rose

rose and afterwards ascended into Heaven. (2.) These Words, *ascended far above all Heavens, that he might fill all things*, had been better rendred, that he might *fulfil all things*, namely all the Prophecies of himself and others concerning his Death and Descent into the Grave and Hell, and his Ascension into the highest Heavens ; far above all the visible Heavens, all the Heavens and Orbs in which the Sun and Stars move. (3.) *Thou hast ascended, — and given Gifts to Men* ; are in the Psalm *litterally* meant of God ; and of Christ only by way of Prophecy, or rather of Emblem and *Accommodation*. And that *Paul* in the *Ephesians* intended no more than an *Accommodation* (or, as *Grotius* speaks, a mystical or allegorical Interpretation) of the words in the Psalm, is evident by the Gifts he mentioneth : *He gave some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists* ; that is, he advanced some to be Apostles, others to be Prophets and Evangelists, in the Christian Church. These Gifts not being
given

given or received till about one thousand Years after *David's* time, *Paul* could not possibly intend a literal Interpretation of *David's* Words, but only to accommodate them to *Christ*, because *Christ* also did ascend on high, and give Gifts to Men. To this effect speak *Grotius*, *Dr. Patrick*, and other famous Interpreters, on this Text.

9. Psal. 95. 9, 10. *Your Fathers tempted me; forty years long was I grieved with this Generation.* These words spoken by and of God, are interpreted of the Holy Ghost, *Heb. 3. 7, 9, 10.* *As saith the Holy Ghost, your Fathers tempted me, &c.* Answ. *As saith the Holy Ghost*, that is, *As saith the Holy Spirit or Inspiration of God by the Mouth of the Prophet David.* So *Estius*, *Piscator*, *Capellus*, *Grotius*, &c. Note that in the Psalmist's words there is an Enallage of the Person, (frequent in the Hebrew, and especially in the Psalms) *Me for Him*, and *I for He*.

10. Psal. 97. 7. *Worship him all ye Gods; or, all ye Angels.* These words, though

though spoken of God, are interpreted of Christ, *Heb. 1. 6.* *Again, when he bringeth the first-begotten into the World, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.* Answ. In the Greek 'tis, When he *bringeth again* the first-begotten into the World, (that is, when he raised Christ from the dead, who is his first-begotten from the dead) *he commandeth*, let even all the Angels of God worship him. 'Tis uncertain whether St. *Paul* had any respect to the Words in the Psalm; but if he had, he doth not quote the Words of the Psalmist, as if they were spoken of Christ: but only declareth the Decree of God (known to him by the Spirit) for subjecting the Angels to Christ, in the same words that the Psalmist had used on another occasion; because they are words most proper to express that Decree, for the Writers of the New Testament generally affect to speak in Scripture Language.

11. Psal. 102. 25. *Of old hast thou laid the Foundation of the Earth, &c.*

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This seems applied to Christ, *Heb. 1. 10, 11, 12, 13. And thou, Lord, in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth; —* but to which of the Angels said he at any time, Sit on my right Hand? *Answ. Thomas Aquinas* hath rightly acknowledged, that the Words of both these Texts may be understood of God only, not of Christ. The Context of the Hebrews hath this sense, *And thou Lord* (that is, and in another Text of the Psalms 'tis said, *Thou Lord. So Estius, Camerarius, Grotius*) *hast laid the Foundation of the Earth; —* But to which of the Angels said he, (*i. e.* said the Founder of the Earth, &c.) *sit on my right Hand?* as he saith to Christ at *Psal. 110. 1.* For though *Psal. 110. 1.* is literally designed of *David*, yet your Hebrews knowing that *David* was a Type of Christ, do also apply the Words there, *sit on my right Hand* unto the Messias or Christ.

12. *Psal. 110. 1. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right Hand, until I make*

make thine Enemies thy Footstool. It appears by *Matth. 22. 43.* that the *Jews* understood these words of *David*, as spoken of God and Christ: and therefore our Saviour puts this Question to them, how Christ could be *David's* Son, (for they were, it should seem, commonly taken to be *David's* Words) if he was *David's* Lord? which can no way be answered but by saying, he was *David's* Son according to the Flesh, and *David's* Lord; as he was God.

Answ. Our Saviour's Words are, *David in Spirit* calleth him Lord, saying, *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit on my right Hand; that is, David in the Spirit of Prophecy foreseeing Christ,* calls him his Lord. But he calleth him so, not because Christ is God, (for if that were true, *himself could have made his Enemies his Footstool*) but because not only the Spirits of *David* and all Saints, but even Angels are in Heaven made subject to Christ, and that as the Reward of his most Holy Life and obsequious and acceptable Death, *1 Pet.*

3. 22. *Phil.* 2. 8, 9. But note that when the Psalmist says, the Lord *said unto my Lord, the Lord said* is to be understood, he hath *in decree* said; he hath decreed it shall be so. So Dr. Patrick in his Paraphrase on this Text.

13. *Psal.* 110. 3. *Thy People shall be willing in the day of thy Power, in the beauty of Holiness from the womb of the Morning, thou hast the Dew of thy Youth.* *Answ.* This Text, as 'tis in the English Translation, is wholly unintelligible. *Seb. Castalia* has, as he is wont, made a probable and elegant sense from the Hebrew thus, *Thy People* (or thy Troops) *shall be chearful; when with sacred Majesty thou goest to Battel, thou shalt have innumerable Youth.* The words are spoken to *David*.

14. *Psal.* 139. 7. *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?* *Answ.* From thy Spirit, is an Hebrew Phrase for *From thee*. Like as when 'tis said of *Moses*, *Psal.* 106. 33. *They provoked his Spirit*; the undoubted meaning is, They provoked *Him*. So also (*Eph.* 4. 30.) *Grieve not*

not the holy Spirit of God, is an Hebraism for Grieve not God.

15. Prov. 8. 24. *When there were no depths, I was brought forth.* Answ. Solomon speaketh here of the Quality or Faculty of Wisdom, by which God and Men order their Affairs wisely. That he meaneth not (as some have fancied) the Son, or the Spirit of God, appears by the Gender he useth: For he saith, ver. 2. *She standeth in the top of high Places:* ver. 3. *She crieth at the gates:* and chap. 7. 4. *Say unto Wisdom, Thou art my Sister.*

16. Prov. 30. 4. *Who hath ascended up into Heaven, —who hath established all the Ends of the Earth? what is his Name, and what is his Son's Name?* Answ. Dr. S. Patrick interpreteth this Verse thus; *Hath any Man ascended into Heaven; —who among Men hath gathered the Wind, or fixed the Earth; what is the Man's Name, or his Sons?*

17. Isa. 6. 1, 8, 9. *I saw the Lord sitting upon a Throne. —I heard the Voice of the Lord, —go tell this Peo-*

ple, Hear ye indeed, but understand not, — (but their Eyes, &c. This Appearance of God is ascribed to Christ, *John* 12. 41. *These things said* *Isaias*, when he saw his Glory: the Words, *Go tell this People*, &c. are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, *Acts* 28. 25, 26. *Well spake the Holy Ghost by* *Isaias*, — *Go unto this People*, &c. *Ans.* (1.) The Words in *St. John* are to be understood not of Christ, but of God; for God only is intended in the foregoing Verse, as all confess. (2.) Accordingly the best Greek Bibles read that Text thus, *These things said* *Isaias*, when he saw *God's* *Glory*. (3.) The Texts in the *Acts* ascribeth the Words in the Prophet to the Holy Spirit, because the Vision and all the Words there mentioned were a Scene wrought in the Prophet's Mind (not exhibited to his outward senses) by the Spirit or Power of God.

18. *Isa.* 7. 14. *A Virgin shall conceive and bare a Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel.* 'Tis added, *Matth.* 1. 23. which

which being interpreted; is *God with us*.

Answ. (1.) *Matthew* (as all know) wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, and therefore did not interpret the Hebrew Name, no more than the Prophet (whose Words he cited) had done before him. We are not bound to subscribe to the Interpretation of the Greek Translator, being an obscure and unknown Person. *Immanuel* is by *Erasmus* interpreted *God with him*, a Name most proper for the Lord Christ; and to this Interpretation of the Name *Immanuel*, *S. Peter* very plainly alludes, *Acts* 10. 38. (2.) Admitting that *Immanuel* may signify God with us, yet the Child also who was to be a Sign to King *Abaz* (and whom *Grotius* thinketh to be the Son of the Prophet *Isaiab*) was called *Immanuel* by order from God. And there are several Names of this high Import and Signification in Scripture. *Elibu*, recorded 1 *Chron.* 12. 20. signifies, *He is my God*. *Eliatha* (mentioned 1 *Chron* 25. 4.) is, *Thou art my God*. (3.) Christ may well be named

Immanuel, taking it for God with us; as God was most plentifully with his People, by sending the Lord Christ to be his Ambassador and Representative, and our Redeemer. Several of the most learned *Trinitarians* acknowledge, that no more than this was intended by this Name.

19. *Isai. 8. 4. He shall be a Stone of Stumbling, &c.* This is spoken of God in the Prophet, and applied to Christ; *Rom. 9. 33. 1 Pet. 2. 8.* *Answ.* Neither St. Paul nor St. Peter cite the Words of the Prophet as spoken of Christ, but only as in some sense applicable to him; namely as Christ also was to many a Stone of stumbling.

20. *Isa. 9. 6, 7. Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; — He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no end; upon the Throne of David to order and establish it with Judgment*

ment and Justice, from henceforth and for ever. The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this. *Answ.* (1.) This cannot be a Prophecy of Christ, because it speaks of a Prince actually born at that time, Unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given. *Isaiah* lived above seven hundred Years before Christ. (2.) The Text is indeed to be understood of *Hezekiah*, but is very extravagantly rendred in the English. In the Hebrew 'tis thus, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, — the wonderful Counsellour, the mighty God, the everlasting Father shall name him the peaceable Prince; his Government shall be multiplied, (i. e. He shall reign long, even twenty nine Years) and he shall have very great Peace; he shall sit upon the Throne of David, ordering and establishing it with Judgment and Justice, from henceforth to the end of his Life: The Zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this: i. e. God's Love to his chosen People shall make good this my Prophecy.*

Note

Note that *no end* of Peace, and *no end* of Riches are never to be strictly understood in humane Affairs ; but we mean by them, *very great* Peace and Riches. Therefore the Peace of *Hezekiah* being in twenty nine Years interrupted by only one Expedition against him ; and that also in the end, unsuccessful ; he may be said to have enjoyed great Peace, or (speaking hyperbolically, as is the manner of this Prophet) Peace without end.

21. *Isai. 35. 4, 5. Your God will come, — then the Eyes of the Blind shall be opened, &c.*

This seems to be applied to Christ, *Matth. 11. 4, 5. Jesus answered, — Go tell John what ye do see and hear, the Blind receive their Sight, &c. Answ. God is said to come to the Jews, in his Ambassadour and Messenger Jesus Christ : and because in and by him God gave Sight to the Blind, &c. John 14. 10. The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the Works. Acts 10. 38. God was with him.*

22. *Isai.*

22. *Isai. 40. 3. The Voice of him that crieth in the Wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, — a high way for our God. This Voice was John Baptist, Matth. 3. 1, 3. And it was Christ's way he prepared, Luke 1. 76. compared with Matth. 11. 10. Mark 1. 7. Acts 13. 24. Answ. John Baptist is said to prepare the way for God, when he prepared the way for Christ; because Christ was the Ambassadors and Representative of God, and God was with and in Christ. Acts 10. 38. God was with him. John 14. 10. The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the Works.*

23. *Isai. 44. 6. Thus saith the Lord, I am the first, and I am the last. Christ also is called the first and the last, Rev. 1. 8, 17. Rev. 22. 13. Answ. Rev. 1. 8. is not spoken of Christ, but of God. At v. 17. Christ is called the First and the Last: but Erasmus, Grotius, and Hugo Cardinalis interpret the Words of him as he is a Man. Christ (saith Hugo) is the first (or most honourable) with good Men; and the last (or most des-*

despised) with Infidels and wicked Men. Briefly, both Almighty God and our Lord Christ, are the First and the last, but in different Senses.

24. Isai. 45. 23. *I have sworn by my Self. — Unto me every Knee shall bow.* These Words of God are applied to Christ; Rom. 14. 10, 11. *We shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, for it is written, — Every Knee shall bow to me, and every Tongue shall confess to God.* *Ans.* In bowing and confessing to Christ at the last Judgment, we are said to bow and confess to God; because Christ then and there holdeth the place of God, representeth him and acteth by his Commission. So Men are said to appear before our Sovereign Lord the King, when they appear at the Bar of his Judges; because the Judges act in the Kings stead, and by his Commission.

25. Isai. 48. 16. *I have not spoken in secret from the Beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord God hath sent me, and his Spirit.*

rit. Answ. In this Text is not Christ, but the Prophet; for Christ was not sent by the Lord God and his Spirit in the days of the Jewish Prophets, *Heb.* 1. 1, 2. But if it were Christ, or the Son that here speaketh, yet this very Text would prove that he is not God; for he is here distinguished from the Lord God, as one who is not himself God, but is *sent by God*. The Prophet seems to speak of the Overthrow of the *Chaldean* and *Babylonish* Troops, by some great Prince, whom God either had or would raise up against them, see *ver.* 14. and 15. Therefore *Grotius* and *Forerius* do not translate (as the English hath it) *From the time that it was, but before this thing is*, or before it hapneth. *There am I*, that is, I declare it as explicitly and clearly as if I were present on the place.

26. Jer. 23. 5. 6. *I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, — in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the Name where—*

whereby he shall be called, The Lord (Heb. Jehovah) our Righteousness. Answ. In the Hebrew 'tis, This is the Name which they shall call the Lord our Justifier : that is, in the happy and peaceful days of the Branch, the Nation shall call God their Justifier, or their merciful Deliverer from all Adversaries and all Evils.

27. Dan. 3. 25. *The Form of the Fourth is like the Son of God. Answ. In the Hebrew 'tis like a Son of God : that is, like an Angel, for so this Passage is explained at ver. 28. Angels are called Sons of God ; Job. 1. 6. Job 38. 7.*

28. Micha 5. 2. *Thou Bethlehem, — out of thee shall come unto me, that is to be Ruler of Israel ; whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting : or as 'tis in the Margin, from the days of Eternity. Answ. In the Hebrew 'tis, From ancient days. Grotius makes this sense of the Verse, whose goings forth (or whose Descent, Original, or Pedigree) is of old, from ancient times.*

For

For Christ descendeth of the most ancient and Royal Stock of David of Bethlehem.

29. Zech. 2. 8, 9. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts ; after the Glory hath he sent me to the Nations which spoiled you ; — I will shake my Hand upon them, and they shall be a Spoil to their Servants : and ye shall know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me.* *Answ.* These Words as they are in the English Translation, are hardly sense. Neither are these Words, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts*, the Words of the Lord of Hosts himself, but of the second Angel, who at ver. 3. and 4. spoke to the first Angel, and to Zechariah. The Verses should have been thus rendred from the Hebrew, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Afterwards shall be Glory, (i. e. after ye are departed our of Babylon, ver. 7. ye shall have Peace and Honour) for he hath sent me to the Nations which spoiled you : (i. e. To the Babylonians and their Confederates) I will shake my Hand upon them, and they shall be a Spoil*

to their Servants; (i. e. I will stir up their Subjects to rebel against them, and spoil them) And ye shall know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me; i. e. hath sent me to punish them, and give you Peace and Glory.

30. Zech. 3. 2. *The Lord (Heb. Jehovah) said unto Satan, The Lord (Heb. Jehovah) rebuke thee.* Ans^r. *The Lord in the first clause is the Angel of the Lord, as appears by ver. 1. for there Satan stands before the Angel. And that indeed he was an Angel, and not true Jehovah, is ascertained by his praying to another Person to rebuke (i. e. to chastise) Satan. When Angels are sent by God, and do represent his Person, the names Jehovah and God are communicated to them; Exod. 3. 2, 4, 6. The Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a Flame of Fire out of the midst of a Bush. —and when the Lord (Heb. Jehovah) saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the midst of the Bush, —Moreover he said, I am the God of thy Father. Briefly, Jehovah is a Name*

Name of God, but such an one as is sometimes communicated both to Persons and Places. Therefore the English have very ill translated *Psal. 83. 18. Thou whose Name alone is Jehovah, art the most High over all the Earth.* In the Hebrew 'tis, *Thou whose Name is Jehovah, thou alone art the most high over all the Earth.*

31. *Zech. 12. 10. They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced.* The same thing is said of Christ, *Rev. 1. 17.* nay the Words (tho' spoken of God) seem to be applied to Christ, *John 19. 37. Answ.* As the Jews in the times of the Prophets, did (as it were) pierce God with their Sins of several kinds; so they pierced him again when they put to death the Lord Christ: as on the contrary, he who received (*i. e.* kindly and respectfully entertained) Christ, was understood as receiving him that sent him. But the Words in the Prophet, are not by St. John interpreted of Christ, but accommodated to Christ and his Sufferings.

E

32. *Mal.*

23. Mal. 3. 1. *I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord (or Prince) whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple.* This Messenger was John Baptist, who prepared the way before Christ. *Ans.* See on *Isai.* 40. 3.

33. Baruch. 3. 35, 37. *This is our God, — afterwards did he shew himself upon the Earth, and conversed with Men.* *Ans.* (1.) 'Tis an Apocryphal Book. (2.) Those that admit the Book, reject these Verses as supposititious. (3.) The original Greek may be thus rendred. Afterwards this Book of the Commandments of God, and the Law which endureth for ever, was seen upon Earth, and *turned over* by Men. Note that the last Verse of *Baruch* 3d, is to be read with the first of *Baruch* the 4th.

Besides these *particular* Answers to the *several Texts* objected to their Doctrine out of the Old Testament, the *Socinians* say farther to them all in general.

I. Where-

1. Whereas so exceptionable a Doctrine as that of the Trinity, and its Dependances, ought to be proved by clear Texts and demonstrative Arguments; on the contrary, these Texts are so far from being clear and evident Proofs, that a Man must have a more than ordinary Wit and Capacity to apprehend how most of them are at all to the purpose, and why or to what end they are alledged by the *Trinitarians*.

2. Though in the Heat of Disputation and Anger, Men catch up any Weapon against their Adversaries; yet out of these Heats the more learned and judicious *Trinitarians* confess, that the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, are not indeed taught in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but are a Revelation made to us in the New. So saith *Tertullian*, *Adv. Prax.* c. 3. *Cyprian*, *Serm.* 6. *St. Jerom*, *Adv. Lucif.* *Theodore* l. 2. *ad. Grac. R. Tuitiensis de Divin. Offic.* l. 11. c. 14. *Fr. L. Brugensis* on *John* 1. 49.

and on *Matth.* 28. 19. *Card. Bellarmine de Christ.* l. 2. c. 6. and more plainly *de Purg.* l. 1. c. 11. *Calovius Anticret.* S. 420. *Alf. Salmero Prof. in Evang.* 11. q. 3. And infinite more, both Catholics and Reformed.

3. If so many had not confessed it, yet the thing is evident in it self. For if the Trinity were indeed taught in the Old Testament, how came the Jewish Church in all Ages to be so wholly ignorant of it, that (as all confess) they had not the least Suspicion, that God is more than one Person? And if in this they had erred, 'tis not to be doubted our Saviour would have reprov'd their Heresy, and carefully set them right, as he did *in the matter of the Resurrection.* But doth our Lord any where charge them with Heresy, for believing that God is only one Person.

4. The *Socinians* confess, that to Persons who never read any thing of this great Question, some of their Interpretations of the Texts, *both of the Old*

Old and New Testament may seem somewhat harsh and strained. But this (they say) is only because such Persons have been *always accustomed* to understand the alledged Texts in a contrary sense, that is, in the sense of the Church: but if they will *often read and consider* the *Socinian* sense of them, they will soon discern that 'tis not only a probable sense, but the true and only sense of which these Texts are capable, if we would reconcile them to the rest of Scripture, and (particularly) to the many and clear Texts and Demonstrations cited and hinted in the first Letter.

S I R,

I am

Yours.

A
Third Letter
TO A
FRIEND,
Concerning the
UNITARIANS,
Called also
SOCINIANS.

Containing the Texts objected to
them out of the Evangelists and
Acts; and their Answers,

Matth. 22. 29. *Ye do err, not knowing the
Scriptures.*

Printed in the Year 1687.



A Third Letter,

Concerning the Unitarians,
called Socinians.

S I R,

IN this I give you the Texts of *the Evangelists and Acts* objected to the *Socinian* Doctrine concerning God our Lord Christ; and the Holy Spirit: and the Answers of the *Socinians* to the Arguments arising from them.

(1.) Matth. 1. 23. *They shall call his Name Immanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us.* *Ans.* See on *Isai.* 7. 14.

(2.) Matth. 2. 2. *Where is he that is born King of the Jews, for we — we come to worship him.* *Ans.* Neither the

the Hebrew, Greek, nor Latin Word for *worship* him, import any more than *a civil* Worship and Honour. And it was the manner over all the East, and particularly among the Jews, to prostrate to Kings, 2 Sam. 19. 18. 1 Kings 1. 16, 23, 31. 2 Sam. 9. 6.

(3.) Mat. 9. 6. *The Son of Man hath Power on Earth to forgive Sins.* *Answ.* This is plainly spoken of Christ as he was a Man. God gave this Authority to the Lord Christ, because he gave to him also to know what was in Mens Hearts; namely, whether their Repentance and outward Professions were sincere and lasting. John 2. 24, 25. Rev. 1. 1.

(4.) Mat. 11. 27. *All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no Man knoweth the Son but the Father, &c.* *Answ.* (1.) If Christ were himself that *one true God*, it could not be said here that *another Person* gave all things into his Hands. (2.) The most Orthodox Interpreters do understand *all things* here, to be all things requisite for pro-

procuring and effecting the Redemption and Salvation of Men, or all things necessary to the executing the Office of the Messias. Whereas our Lord adds, *None knoweth the Son but the Father, &c.* Maldonate and Grotius make the sense to be, None but God knows *what the Son's Office is*, or what he is to do and suffer in order to the Salvation of Men; as on the other side, none but the Son knows *the Father's Mind*, concerning the way and means by which Mankind is to be redeemed and saved.

(5.) Mat. 12. 31. *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven.* *Answ.* St. Austin, and generally all judicious Interpreters, by Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost or Spirit, understand Mens ascribing (with the Scribes and Pharisees in this Chapter) the Miracles and Works done apparently by the Spirit or Power of God, unto Magick, or the Power of the Devil. So that the Holy Ghost or Spirit is not in this Text a Person or a God, but merely the Power of God. (6.)

(6.) Mat. 18. 20. *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.* Matth. 28. 20. *I am with you always, even to the end of the World.* *Ans.* Christ is in the midst of, and is with his People; not by an immediate Presence, as God is, but by his most powerful Aid and Help, which he affordeth partly by his continual and succesful Mediation with God for them all in general, *Heb.* 7. 25. partly by the Angels who are under his Directions, and by him engaged in the Defence of the Faithful, *Heb.* 1. 14.

(7.) Matth. 26. 63. *Tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.* Like to which Text are *Matth.* 14. 33. *Mat.* 16. 16. *John* 1. 49. *Ans.* It being manifest that Princes are called Sons of God by the Psalmist, *Psal.* 82. 6. As also that *Psal.* 2. 7. (*Thou art my Son*) is literally meant of David. Hence it was that the Jews both then and now call the Messiah *the Son of God*: not because (as some imagine) they think he is God, or is generated

of the Divine Substance; but because they expect he shall be a very great Prince, an universal Monarch, and therefore the Son of God in a more perfect and higher sense than *David*, or other Princes are.

(8.) *Mar. 28. 19. Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* *Ans.* (1.) To be baptized in the Name of a Person or Persons, is a Rite by which one delivers himself to the Institution, Instruction, and Obedience of such Person or Persons: so that to be baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is to profess to be led and guided by them; or (as *Grotius* expresses this matter) 'tis to declare we will admit of no other thing as a part of our Religion, but what proceeds from these, that is, nothing but what is ~~commanded~~ by God or the Father, and has been ~~delivered~~ by his Son the Lord Christ, and ~~confirmed~~ externally by the Miracles, and internally with the Witness and Testimony of the Spirit, that
is,

is, of the Power and Inspiration of God. (2.) 'Tis in vain, not to say ridiculously pretended, that a Person or thing is God, because we are baptized *unto* it, or *in the Name of* it. For then *Moses* and *John Baptist* also would be Gods, 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. *Our Fathers were — all baptized unto Moses.* Acts 19. 3. *Unto what then were ye baptized? and they said, Unto John's Baptism;* that is, (saith the Generality of Interpreters) *unto John* and the Doctrine by him delivered. Nor can it be doubted that to be *baptized unto* a Person or Persons, and to be *baptized in the Name of* such Person or Persons, is the same thing. For (1.) 'Tis acknowledged by all that understand the Hebrew and Syriac Idioms. (2.) 'Tis manifest by comparing some Texts of Scripture. For what in some of them is called *baptizing unto*, is in others called *baptizing in the Name of*. Rom. 6. 3. *As many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ,* (or *unto Jesus Christ*; for 'tis the same Preposition in the Greek that is

is used of *Moses*, 1 Cor. 10. 1, 2. and of *John Baptist*, Acts 19. 3.) have been baptized into (or unto) his Death. Gal. 3. 27. As many of you as have been baptized into Christ (in the Greek, unto Christ) have put on Christ. Acts 2. 38. Be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ. Acts 8. 16. They were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Who does not now see, that to be baptized unto, and in the Name of Christ, or any other Person or thing, are used as equivalent terms? And accordingly the Fathers, particularly *Tertullian*, often say baptized unto the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Nothing therefore can be inferred from this Text, for the Godhead of the Son or Spirit; because as now Christians are baptized unto them, so the Jews were baptized unto *Moses*, and *John's* Disciples unto *John*.

(9.) Luke 1. 16, 17, 76. Many of the Children of Israel shall he (*John Baptist*) turn to the Lord their God; and he shall go before him in the Spirit and Power

Power of Elias. — Thou Child shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the Face of the Lord to prepare his way. Answ. See on Isa. 40. 3.

(10.) Luke 17. 5. *The Apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our Faith. Answ. By thy Prayers to God, which are always heard for us.*

(11.) Luke 24. 47. *That Repentance and Remission of Sin should be preached in his (Christ) Name. Answ. The sense is, Christ commanded the Disciples to require Men to repent, and on their so doing to assure them in his Name (or from him) that God would forgive them.*

(12.) John 1. 1. &c. *In the Beginning was the Word, &c. Answ. The Trinitarian Exposition of this Chapter is absurd, and contradictory: 'tis this,*

In the Beginning: i. e. from all Eternity. Answ. From all Eternity is before the Beginning, or without Beginning; not in the Beginning. In the Beginning must refer to some time and thing, it must be in the Beginning of the World, or of the Gospel, or of the Word

Word ; and in which ever of these senses it is taken, *the Word* cannot be from all Eternity, by Virtue or Force (I mean) of this Expression, *Was the Word*. i. e. was God the Son. *Answ.* But where in Scripture is *the Word* called *God the Son*?

The Word was with God; i. e. The Son was with the Father. *Answ.* It seems then that *God* in this clause is *the Father*. But was not the Son also with the Holy Ghost, and is not he too (according to the *Trinitarians*) *God*, or a *God*? If he is, why doth St. *John* only say *the Son was with the Father*; and how comes the Father to engross here the Title of *God* to the Exclusion of the Holy Ghost?

The Word was God. What shall we do here? was *the Word* the Father? for so they interpreted *God* in the foregoing clause. No, *God* in this clause, hath a new meaning, 'tis *God the Son*. But in the whole Scripture there are not these words, *God the Son*.

The same was in the Beginning with
F
God

God. How comes this to be again repeated? for *John* had said once before, that the Word was with God. They care not, 'tis said, and that's enough. The Truth is, according to their sense of this Context, no account can be given of this Repetition, and they must allow it to be a meer Tautology. But let us (say the *Socinians*) hear *Grotius* interpreting this sublime Proem of *St. John's* Gospel.

Ver. 1. *In the Beginning*, (i.e. when God created the Heavens and the Earth. For these Words are taken from *Gen.* 1. 1.) *was the Word.* The Hebrews call that *Power and Wisdom* of God, by which he made the World, and does all other his extraordinary Works, *his Word.* *Psal.* 33. 6. *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made.* *Heb.* 11. 2. *The Worlds were made by the Word of God.* *2-Pet.* 3. 5. *By the Word of God the Heavens were of old.* They borrowed this Expression from *Moses*, who in describing the Creation, saith that *God said, Let there be Light,* *Gen.* 1. 3.

God

God said, *Let there be a Firmament*, Gen. i. 6. and so through the whole Chapter. Undoubtedly *Moses* is not to be understood of a Word orally spoken, for God is a Spirit; but his meaning is, God put forth his *Power and Wisdom*, and thereby created Light and the Firmament, &c. As easily as Men can speak these Words, *Let there be Light, Let there be a Firmament*. Thus we see why the Divine Wisdom and Power was called *the Word* by *David*, and so many Writers of the New Testament.

The Word was with God; i. e. It was not yet in the World, or not yet made Flesh, (*ver. 10. and 14.*) but with God.

The Word was God; i. e. The Word (or Divine Wisdom and Power) is not something different from God; but being his Wisdom and Power, is God. 'Tis the common Maxim of Divines, that the Attributes and Properties of God are God. Which is in some sense true. We may also here note, that those Per-

sons (whether Angels or Men) to whom the *Divine Word* hath been in an extraordinary Degree communicated, have also had the Names *Jehovah* and God given to them. The Angel who destroyed *Sodom* by a *miraculous Tempest* from Heaven is called *Jehovah*; so is he that promised *Abraham* to cause *Sarah* to conceive a Son, *Gen.* 18. 13. On the same account God says to *Moses*, *Exod.* 7. 1. *See I have made thee a God to Pharaoh.* *Ver.* 2. *The same was in the Beginning with God.* This is here again repeated by the Evangelist, to teach us that *the Word* is so God, that it is not all that God is; there being other Properties and Attributes of God, that are communicable as well as the *Word*.

Ver. 3. *All things were made by him.* The English-Geneva Translation saith here, All things were made by *It*. But it matters not, for *the Word* begins here to be spoken of as a Person, by the same *Figure of Speech* that *Solomon* saith, *Wisdom hath builded her House,* and *hewn out her seven Pillars,* *Prov.*

9. 1.

9. 1. And that *David* calls God's Com-
mandments *Counsellours*, Pſal. 119. 24.

Ver. 4. *In him*: i. e. In him when
he was in the World and was made
Flesh; Ver. 10. and 14.

Was Life. i. e. By the Word, when made
Flesh or *Man*, the way and manner of ob-
taining Life (eternal Life) was disco-
vered to the *Gentiles*. The way is
the Doctrine of the Gospel, *John* 12. 50.

And the Life was the Light of Men;
i. e. The Life-giving Doctrine by him
taught was that Light, to and by which
Men may and ought to direct their
Steps in order to eternal Blessedness.
John 12. 50. So here the Doctrine of
Christ, the Gospel, is called Light, as
before it was called Life.

Ver. 8. *He (John) was not that
Light*; i. e. *John* neither was, nor
was the bringer of the Light of the
Gospel: though he bare Witness to
both. 'Tis usual in familiar Speech to
call the Bringer of a thing, by the name
of the thing he brings: and for this
reason our Saviour is called Life, and

Light, *John* 14. 6. *John* 8. 12.

Ver. 10. *He was in the World.* Here the Evangelist returns to speak of *the Word*. The sense is, in Process of time the Word became incarnate, that is, *Abode on the Person of Jesus Christ*, and so conversed in the World among Men. God communicated his Word, (that is, a vast Effusion of his Divine Power and Wisdom) to his Son the Lord Christ, *Acts*. 10. 38.

The World was made by him ; i. e. The World and all Men were made by this Word, which (afterwards) abode on Jesus Christ : and which *in* and *by* him performed Works not much less wonderful than was the first Creation.

And the World knew him not. Knew not that the Word abiding on Jesus, was that very Divine Word which made both the World and all Men.

Ver. 11. *He came unto his own ; i. e.* To those whom he had made, *ver.* 10. *He* is to be understood of the Word. The Word came in the Person of Christ.

His

His own received him not ; i. e. did not own him for what he indeed was, the Divine Word. 'Tis again repeated, to brand the Ingratitude and Stupidity of the *Jews* of that Age.

Ver. 12. *Them that believe on his Name.* On his Name, is an Hebrew Phrase, as much as to say, *on him ; i. e.* Them that believed on the Word, made Flesh : or them that received and owned him for what he indeed was, even the Divine Word.

Ver. 14. *And the Word was made Flesh ; Or, For the Word was made Flesh : i. e.* did abide on and inhabit an humane Person, the Person of Jesus Christ ; and so was (in Appearance) made Flesh or *Man* : for Flesh is the usual Scripture Phrase for Man, *Gen. 6. 12. Deut. 5. 26. Jer. 12. 12. Jer. 17. 5. Mark 13. 20.*

And we beheld his Glory ; i. e. The Glory of the Man, on whom *the Word* did abide and inhabit in him. We beheld his Glory in his many Miracles, *John 2. 11.* Also, in his Transfiguration,

tion, 2. *Pet.* 1. 17. And on many other occasions.

The Glory as of the only begotten of the Father; i. e. A Glory worthy of the only-begotten of the Father. Christ is called the only-begotten on several accounts, this especially, that he only was begotten by the Divine Power on a Woman, *Luke* 1. 35.

Ver. 15. John *bare Witness of him* — *saying, — He was before me: i. e.* Was before me in Dignity, being the only-begotten of God. So *Erasmus* and *Beza* as well as *Grotius*.

Ver. 18. *Which is in the Bosom of the Father: i. e.* Who is most dear to the Father. So the Phrase signifies in other Texts; *Numb.* 11. 12. *Deut.* 13. 6.

Hath declared him: i. e. hath revealed his Mind and Will to Men. Hitherto (for the most part) *Grotius*.

Briefly, *The Word* (according to *Grotius*) is not an eternal Son of God, but is here the Power and Wisdom of God; which Word abiding without
mea-

measure on the Lord Christ; (as it is expressly said, *Heb.* 1. 3. *Matth.* 28. 18. *Col.* 2. 3. see the Notes on these Texts) 'tis therefore spoken of as a Person, and as one Person with Christ and he with that.

This notion of *the Word* will lead a Man through all the Difficulties of this Chapter, with far more ease than any other hitherto offered. Besides that it is so well founded, as has been shown on *ver.* 1. 'tis also as easy and obvious, and clears the sense as much as can be expected on a Portion of Scripture, that is so obscure and dark, and which was designedly written after a mysterious and sublime manner.

(13.) John 2. 19, 21. *Destroy this Temple, and in three Days I will raise it up. — He spake of the Temple of his Body.*
Ans. Christ raised his Body, by a Power communicated to Him by the Father: and accordingly his being raised, is always attributed to the Father, not to himself, *Gal.* 1. 1. Paul an *Apo-*
stle, — by Jesus Christ; and God, the
Father

Father, who raised him from the dead. See also *Eph. 1. 19, 20. 1 Thess. 1. 9, 10.* Had our Lord raised himself by his own proper Power, his Resurrection could in no respect be ascribed to the Father.

(14.) *John 2. 25. He knew what was in Man.* *Ans.* The Knowledg which the Lord Christ had, or now in his state of Exaltation hath, of the Secrets of Mens Hearts, is the pure Gift of, and Revelation from God, and the Divine Word abiding on him. *Rev. 1. 1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to shew unto his Servants.* *John 3. 34. God giveth not the Spirit by measure (that is, sparingly) unto him.* But see also what they say on *Rev. 2. 23.*

(15.) *John 3. 13. No Man hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven; even the Son of Man, which is in Heaven.* *Ans.* (1.) *Erasmus, Beza, Camerarius,* acknowledg that the Greek should be rendred, which was in Heaven. Neither so are the Words, *which was in Heaven,* an idle Repetition of what went before; for it

it is repeated *majoris asseverationis causa*, for its greater Confirmation. The most learned Orthodox Interpreters understand this ascending into, and being in Heaven, as also the descending, only *metaphorically*; and interpret thus, *No Man hath ascended up to Heaven: No Man hath known the Mind of God our Heavenly Father. But he that came down from Heaven; i. e. but he that is sent to you as the Messenger of Heaven, or of God. Even the Son of Man which is in Heaven; i. e. even I whose Meditation and Conversation is in Heaven. As St. Paul says of himself, Phil. 3. 20. Our Conversation is in Heaven.* So they interpret the whole Passage, of the humane Nature, I suppose, because our Lord considers and speaks of himself here by the Name only of *the Son of Man*. But the *Socinians* do (generally) understand this Text literally, and say, that 'tis here intimated that before our Lord entred upon his Office of Messias, he was taken up to Heaven to be instructed

ed in the Mind and Will of God (as *Moses* was into the Mount, *Exod.* 24. 1, 2, 12.) and from thence descended to execute his Office, and declare the said Will of God. The same thing they say is also hinted, *John* 6. 38, 46, 51, 62. *John* 8. 40.

(16.) *John* 3. 18. *The only begotten.*
Answ. See on *John* 1. 14.

(17.) *John* 5. 19. *Whatsoever things He (the Father) doth, those also doth the Son.* *Answ.* The Son doth them, only by the Spirit or Power of the Father inhabiting in him. *John* 5. 30. *I can do nothing of my self.* *John* 14. 10. *The Father that dwelleth in me, He doth the Works.* *Matth.* 12. 28. *I cast out Devils by the Spirit of God.*

(18.) *John* 5. 23. *That all Men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* *Answ.* The meaning only is, as we honour God or the Father, so we must not forget to honour also the Son of God; because to him the Father hath committed the last Judgment of all Men, *ver.* 22. An Equality of Honour

nour is no more intended here, than an Equality of Perfection in those words, *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect*, Matth. 5. 48. For the sense there is, as God is truly perfect, so do ye endeavour to be perfect with that Perfection of which your finite Natures are capable.

19. John 6. 44. *I will raise him up at the last Day.* *Ans.* The Lord Christ shall raise and change our Bodies by the same Divine *Word*, or Power of God communicated to him, and abiding on him, by which while he was in this mortal Life he raised and *changed* the Body of *Lazarus*, which was corrupted: that the Power by which he restored *Lazarus* to Life again, was not our Lords own proper Power, but God's, that is the Fathers; is plainly intimated by our Lord himself, *John* 11. 41. *Father, I thank thee, that thou hast heard me, &c.* Almighty God can lodge even in dry Bones, a Power of restoring the dead, *2 Kings* 13. 21. see also what hath been said on *John* 5. 19. (20.)

(20.) John 8. 56, 58. Abraham *rejoiced* (or desired) *to see my Day, and saw it.* — *Before Abraham was, I am,* Or (as 'tis rendred by the *Syriac, Nonnus* and *Grotius*) *I was.* *Answ. (1.)*

Abraham saw Christ's Day, in the Spirit of Prophecy; he saw it as coming, not as present; he foresaw (as he desired) the time when it should be.

(2.) *St. Austin* has confessed, that Christ is here said to be before *Abraham*, not actually, but in the Counsel Decree, and Ordination of God. And so *St. Peter* explains this matter; 1 *Pet.* 1. 20. *Who verily was fore-ordained from the Foundation of the World, but was made manifest in these last times.* In like manner at *Rev.* 13. 8. Christ is called *the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World.* The Words are, *Whose Names are not written in the Book of Life, of the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World.* Every one sees that Christ could be no otherways slain from the Foundation of the World, but in the Counsel and Decree of God.

See

See more such Instances on *John 17. 5.*
 'Tis true the *Jews* did not apprehend
 in what sense our Lord meant he was
 before *Abraham* : but neither did he
 intend or care they should ; for finding
 them averse from Truth and Piety, he
 often so spake to some of them, as to
 perplex and affront their Blindness and
 Arrogance yet more, and not to in-
 struct them, see for this *Luke 8. 10.*

(21.) *John. 10. 30. I and the Father
 are one. Answ.* Not one God, but as
 Friends are said to be one. Thus our
 Lord explains himself, *John 17. 11.*
*Keep them whom thou hast given me, that
 they may be one as we are.* The Disci-
 ples could be one no otherways than as
 Friends are one, (namely in *Affection
 and Design*) neither with one another
 nor with God. *Ver. 22. The Glory
 which thou gavest me, (i. e. the Power
 of doing Miracles) I have given them,
 that they may be one, as we are one.*

(22.) *John 10. 33. Thou being a Man
 makest thy self God, or a God. Answ.*
 It appears they lied, by our Saviours
 Answer

Answer at ver. 36. *Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the World, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God.* Had our Lord been more than the Son of God, he would have owned his Dignity, when they charged him with Blasphemy for saying those things, from which it might (by their strained Consequences) be inferred that he made himself a God. *Camerus* on this Text ingenuously confesses, that *in this Context* our Lord doth not make himself God : He adds, that times and circumstances required, that the Revelation of this Mystery should be deferred till our Lord's Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven. In which saying he gives up to the *Socinians* all the Texts of the Evangelists.

(23.) John 10.38. *The Father is in me, and I in him.* Answ. 'Tis also said, 1 John 4. 16. *He that dwelleth in Love, (i. e. exerciseth Love and Charity) dwelleth in God, and God in him.* Therefore Christ and Christians are said to be

bc in God, and God in them, by their mutual Love ; or because of their mutual Love.

(24.) John 12. 41. *These things said Isaias, when he saw his Glory, and spake of him.* Answ. see on Isai. 6. 1, 8, 9.

(25.) John 14. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.* Answ. Our Lord has himself interpreted this. John 12. 44. *He that believeth on me, believeth not on me ; but on him that sent me.*

(26.) John 14. 7, 9. *If ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also : and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him : — He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father ; how sayest thou then, shew us the Father ?* Answ. It is also said, Luke 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me ; 'tis there farther added, He that despiseth you, despiseth me ; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* Shall we now infer, that the Disciples and Ministers of Christ, are Christ : nay, are him also that sent Christ, namely God ? The Truth therefore is, when

we are said to know, see, hear, despise God, in knowing, seeing, hearing, or despising Christ, or his Ministers; the meaning only is, that Christ and his true Ministers being the Ambassadors and Messengers of God, and revealing to us his Nature and Will, they are so far forth to be esteemed one with God; and in seeing and hearing them, we see and hear him as much as the invisible God can be seen or heard, in this mortal Life.

(27.) John 14. 14. *If ye ask any thing in my Name, I will do it.* *Answ.* The obvious meaning is, if ye pray for any thing to God, using my Name; I will cause it to be done for you by my Intercession, the general Intercession that I will make for all good Christians. *Heb. 7. 25.* *He is able to save them that come unto God by him, (i. e. that pray to God in his Name)* seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them.

(28.) John 16. 8, 13, 14. *When he (the Comforter, or Spirit) is come, he will reprove the World of Sin: — He shall*

shall not speak of himself: — He shall receive of mine, and shew it to you. Here the Spirit is plainly spoken of as a Person. *Ans.* (1.) Of those that are *Unitarians*, all the *Arians*, and very many *Socinians*, do acknowledg, that the Holy Spirit is a Person, chief of the Heavenly Spirits, prime Minister of God and Christ; because he is here called the Comforter (or Advocate) and said to hear, speak, and teach; and elsewhere to interceed for us. But they add, that this very Context in telling us, (*ver. 13.*) *He will guide you into all Truth, for he shall not speak of himself*; Sufficiently sheweth that he is not God, or a God. For it were intolerable to say of God; he shall lead you into all Truth, for he shall not speak of himself: the contrary is true of God, he shall lead you into all Truth, *For he shall speak of himself.* (2.) But more generally the *Socinians* say, that Actions proper to Persons are by a Figure ascribed to things, and even to *Qualities* of things, not only in Ho-

ly Scripture, but in all Writers. God's Commandments are called *Counsellours*, Psal. 119. 24. Understanding is said *to lift up her Voice*, Prov. 8. 1. Wisdom *to build* her House, and *hew out* her seven Pillars, Prov. 9. 1. Charity *to think* no evil, 1 Cor. 13. 5. Water and Blood *to bear Witness*, 1 John 5. 8. The Stone set up by *Joshua to hear* all the Words of the Lord, Josh. 24. 27. Are these things Persons? Is it not evident that Actions proper to Persons are ascribed to them, as well as to the Holy Spirit, or Power and Inspiration of God, by the Figure called *Prosopopeia*? Briefly, We ought to conceive thus of this matter, a great Effusion of God's Inspiration and Power being to be given to the Disciples, that it might be a continual Director and Guide when the Lord Christ was no more personally with them: therefore this Guide is by the aforesaid Figure spoken of in such terms as if it were some Doctor, Teacher, and Advocate. Hence it is said to reprove the World, to guide
into

into all Truth, to intercede for us (namely because it suggesteth Prayer and Affection in Prayer) also not to speak of himself, but to speak what he shall hear from God; to receive of Christ's, that is, receive of God the Remainder of Christ's Doctrine, and teach it to the Apostles. For 'tis to be noted that our Lord left some things to be taught by this Inspiration of God; because the Disciples were not capable to hear and believe them, till they had seen the great Miracles of our Lords Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, *John 16. 12. I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now; Howbeit when the Spirit of Truth is come, he shall guide you into all Truth.* The Spirit that guided the Apostles into all Truth, was it not the meer Inspiration of God?

It is for the same Reason, and by the same Figure, that this Power and Inspiration of God in the Apostles, is said to bear Witness, *John 15. 26. to search Mysteries, 1 Cor. 2. 10. 11. to distribute*

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bute Gifts, 1 *Cor.* 12. 2. to appoint Bishops, *Acts* 20. 28. to glorify Christ, *John* 16. 14.

Finally, It appeared in the Form of a Dove on Christ, and of Cloven Tongues on the Apostles, *Matth.* 3. 16. *Acts* 2. 3, 4. Because God conveyed this Divine Energy to the Lord Christ, and to the Apostles, in these outward Symbols, which were fit Emblems of the Quality of the Gifts then bestowed. The Dove signified the mild and peaceable Spirit of Christ; and that the Power then conveyed to him should not be for the Damage or Hurt of Mankind: The Tongues denoted, that the Apostles did then and there receive the Gift or Faculty of speaking with many Tongues. But what sense can the *Trinitarians* make of these things? they say the Spirit is a Person and God: did God receive and assume the Shape of a Dove, that is, of a Brute? What hinders but that they may believe all the Transformations in the Metamorphosis of *Ovid*?

(29.)

(29.) John 16.15. *All things that the Father hath, are mine.* *Answ.* (1.) *St. Paul* hath said as much of every Christian; 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. *All things are Yours: —things present, things to come, all are yours.* 2. *All things* in this Text of *St. John*, are all things relating to the Christian Faith, Doctrine and Discipline: for it follows, *Therefore said I, He (the Spirit) shall take of mine, and shew it to you.* The meaning of the whole Passage is, all things relating to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Christian Church, *which the Father hath in his Mind and Design, are mine:* that is, are known to me, and shall (for the most part of them) be ordered by my self: as for the rest which I my self do not discover or order, the Spirit shall receive it, and shew it to you.

(30.) John 17. 5. *Glorify me with thine own self, with the Glory I had with thee, before the World was.* *Answ.* (1.) *St. Austin* and many other learned and Orthodox Interpreters, not only grant, but

but contend that the meaning here is, Let me now *actually* receive that Glory with thy self, which I had with thee *in thy Degree and Design* before the World was. This Interpretation is confirmed by this, that the Sufferings of Christ were to precede his *actual* Glory, 1 Pet. i. 11. *Searching what, and what manner of time the Spirit — did signify, when it testified before-hand the Sufferings of Christ, and the Glory that should follow.* (2.) As 'tis here said, *The Glory that I had with thee before the World was* : so 'tis said, 2 Cor. 5. 1. *We have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands.* Where *we have* is, we have it in God's Decree and Intention, or it is prepared for us ; 2 Tim. 1. 9. *Grace was given us in Christ before the World was.* Where again *was given to us* is, was given in God's Decree and Intention. Therefore so also we may understand, that Christ had Glory before the World was.

(31.) John 17.10. *All mine are thine, and thine are mine.* *Answ.* It appears by the foregoing verse, and by what follows, that Christ speaks of such as were or should be his Disciples. His meaning is, all that are my Disciples, are of thy giving to me, and still remain thine; and all that are true Servants and Lovers of God, readily become mine, that is, Disciples to me.

(32.) John 17. 24. *For thou lovedst me from the Foundation of the World.* *Answ.* None can deny, that God loved all the Elect from the Foundation of the World. To God all things are present; not only what is past, but what is to come, is present to the Divine Mind and Knowledg.

(33.) John 20.28. *Thomas answered, and said unto him my Lord, and my God:* Or, O my Lord, and O my God! For 'tis an Attic Vocative. *Answ.* 1. *Nestorius*, Patriarch of *Constantinople*, was of Opinion that these Words were not designed to Christ, but to God. For though the Evangelist saith, *Thomas answered and said un-*

to him (*i. e.* to Christ) *O my Lord, and O my God.* Yet the Exclamation might be addressed to God as it's Object, tho it was also *an* Answer to our Saviour, or *in* Answer to our Saviour, and to what he had said at *ver.* 27. Or if the Words were addressed to our Saviour also, it may be admitted as true what others say here: Namely, (2.) When *Thomas* had felt the Prints of the Spear and Nails in our Saviour's Side and Hands, and was thereby fully satisfied that he was indeed risen again, he breaks forth into this Exclamation; the first part of which he directed to Christ, the other to God. *O my Lord!* are Words of Congratulation to our Saviour; *And O my God!* Words of Admiration and Praise to God.

(34.) Acts 5. 3, 4. *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart, to lie to the Holy Ghost? — Thou hast not lied unto Men, but unto God.* *Answ.* Some of the most celebrated Interpreters among the *Trinitarians* have owned, that this Text ought to be thus understood, *Why hast*

hast thou lied to the Holy Ghost : i. e. to us Apostles who have (thou knowest) the Holy Spirit or Inspiration of God in us. *Thou hast not lied unto Men, but unto God ; i. e.* thou hast not hereby lied to Men only or chiefly, but to God, who is in us by his Spirit and Inspiration. This Interpretation is confirmed by 1 *Thess.* 4. 8. *He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not Man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.* Here 'tis manifest, that those who despised the Apostles, are said to despise God, because God was in them by his Spirit : What hinders then, but that for the same reason, those that lied to the Apostles, should be said and understood to lie to God ?

(35.) *Acts* 7. 59. *They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit.* *Answ.* (1.) The Word *God* is not in the Original Greek, in no Greek Bible. (2.) Admitting this Word *God* to be here rightly understood, yet the Greek when rendred Grammatically, maketh this sense, calling

ling upon God, and saying, *O Lord of Jesus* receive my Spirit. (3.) Admitting the English Translation, the meaning here is only this, *Stephen* called upon God, and he also said, *Lord Jesus* receive my Spirit; because at the same time he saw *Jesus* (in Prophetick Vision) standing at the Right Hand of God. He began to have this Vision while he stood before the Council, *ver.* 56. and it continued with him to the Moment of his Expiration, for his Consolation and Support; as is granted by many learned Interpreters of the Orthodox party.

(36.) *Acts* 9.14, 21. *To bind all that call upon thy Name.* (The Words are spoken to the Lord Christ, as is made undeniable by *ver.* 17.) — *Is not this he, that destroyed them which called on this Name* (Christ's Name) *in Jerusalem?* *Ans.* (1.) The Socinians generally not only grant, but earnestly contend, that Christ is to be worshipped and prayed to: because God hath (they say) by his abiding Word or Power

Power given to the Lord Christ, a Faculty of knowing all things, and an Ability to relieve all our Wants. The Polonian *Unitarians* were so zealous in this matter, that they excommunicated and deposed from their Ministry, such of their own Party as denied that Christ might be prayed to, and worshipt with Divine Worship. This had bad Effects, therefore the *Unitarians* of *Transylvania* were more moderate, they admitted to the Ministers and Professors-Places, those that rejected the Invocation and Adoration of Christ; but obliged them under their Hands, not to speak against worshipping or praying to the Lord Christ in their Sermons or Lectures. (2.) Those *Unitarians* that reject the Invocation of Christ, say, 1. That the most learned of the Ancients were of their Opinion. It appears by St. *Austin* (T. 6. L. 1. de *Heres. Num.* 43.) and by *Photius* (Cod. 147.) that *Origen* denied that the Son was to be adored or prayed to: He is, saith *Origen*, not the Author, but Procurer

curer of the good things bestowed on us. 2. Our Lord Christ, when he

was consulted about the Object and matter of Prayers, directed his Disciples to God ; *Luke 11. 1, 2. When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven.*

3. It seems clear enough, that he forbade the Disciples to pray to himself ; ordering them at the same time to pray to God in his Name, or *for his Sake :*

John 16. 23. In that Day (i. e. after I am risen, have seen you again, and being ascended into Heaven have procured for you the Comforter, whose Consolations none can take from you. So all Interpreters of note) ye shall ask me nothing ; — whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.

4. To make Christ himself the Object of Prayer, is to destroy his Mediatory Office. For if he doth hear our Prayers, and can and doth (by a Power constantly resident in him) relieve our Wants ; to what purpose is he our Mediator with God. They that make it a Duty to pray to Christ, will find

find it hard to give a good account of those Words, *Heb. 7. 25. He (Christ) is able to save unto the uttermost, all that come unto God by him, (i. e. that pray to God in his Name, or for his sake) seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them.* What can be more evident, than that here Christ's saving us from the Evils we either fear or labour under, is ascribed not to his own inherent Power, but to his Intercession with the Almighty. It is farther to be observed, that these Gentlemen say, that Christ's Mediation and Intercession for us, is not to be understood of a verbal or personal Mediation, proceeding from a particular Knowledg of our Wants and Prayers, but *he mediates by his Merits*; that is, by the perfect Obedience and most acceptable Services, that he has performed to God.

As to the objected Texts, *To bind all that call upon thy Name.* And again, *Is not this he that destroyed them that called on this Name in Jerusalem?* They answer, that the Original Greek may be

be translated several ways. 1. Thus, to bind all *that are called by thy Name*. And, Is not this he, that destroyed them *who are called by this Name* in *Jerusalem*? that is, All that from *Christ* are called *Christians*. And this seems to be the genuine sense of these Texts. 2. Thus, 'To bind all *that name thy Name*. And, Is not this he that destroyed them *who name this Name* in *Jerusalem*? that is, that profess the Name of *Christ*, that speak of *Christ* as their Master and Teacher. Agreeably to this, *St. Paul* saith, 2 *Tim.* 2. 9. *Let all that name the Name of Christ, depart from Iniquity.* 3. Thus, as 'tis in our English Bibles, to bind all that *call upon thy Name*. And, Is not this he, that destroyed them *that called on this Name* in *Jerusalem*? For though the first Christians did not pray to the Lord *Christ*, yet they called upon his Name in Prayer, they used his Name in their Prayers to God, praying for all things in his Name; which is a *calling upon his Name* in the most proper and grammatical

matrical sense of these Words ; and is indeed the only sense of which they are capable, when they are used of a Man as Christ was. So they.

(37.) Acts 15. 28. *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us.* *Ans.* that is, to God's Inspiration in us, and therefore to us also : See on John 16. 8, 13, 14.

(38.) Acts 20. 28. *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood.* *Ans.* (1.) It appears by the *Syriac*, the *Armenian*, and the most ancient Greek Bibles, that the true reading of this Text is, *Feed the Church of Christ*, which he hath purchased with his own Blood. (2.) Admitting the reading in the vulgar Editions of the Greek, yet some great Masters of that Tongue have rendred the Greek Words thus, *Feed the Church of God*, which he hath purchased with *his own Son's Blood*. (3.) Admitting the Translation in our English Bibles, some learned Men (particularly *Erasmus*) have noted, that the Blood of Christ

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is here called the Blood of God, because it was *the Blood which God gave for the Redemption of the World.* So *John 1. 36. Behold the Lamb of God: that is, the Lamb of Sacrifice which God giveth for the Sins of the World.* For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son to die and shed his Blood for us.

From,

S I R,

Your

Faithful and Assured.

A
Fourth Letter
TO A
FRIEND,

Concerning the
UNITARIANS,
Called also
SOCINIANS.

Containing the Texts objected to
them out of the Epistles and Re-
velation.

Rom. 1. 25. *Who changed the Truth of God
into a Lie ; and worshipped and served the
Creature, more than the Creator, who is
blessed for ever. Amen.*

Printed in the Year 1687.

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A Fourth Letter, Concerning the Unitarians, *vulgarly called Socinians.*

S I R,

WE are come to the last part of our Task, the Texts of the Epistles and Revelation, and the Answers of the *Socinians* to them.

(1.) Rom. 1. 3. *Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the Seed of David, according to the Flesh.* Rom. 9. 5. *Of whom, as concerning the Flesh, Christ came; who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen.*

Ans. (1.) It is very probable, by the *Syriac* and by some Passages in *Ignatius* and other Fathers, that the word *God* was not originally in this Text, for they

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read it thus, Of whom as concerning the Flesh Christ came, *who* is blessed *above* all for ever. 2. But admitting the reading in the vulgar Editions of the Greek, the Greek Words (as *Erasmus* and *Curcellanus* observe) should have been thus translated, Of whom, as concerning the Flesh, Christ came; *God who is over all be blessed for ever.* For the Words are a Thanksgiving for Christ, and for his Exaltation. The Addition of the word *Amen*, proper in Prayers and Thanksgivings, doth much countenance this Translation.

3. These Words, *according to the Flesh*, and *as concerning the Flesh*, never signify (as *Trinitarians* would here interpret them) *according to his humane Nature*, as if Christ had also a Divine Nature: *Rom. 9. 3. My Kinsmen according to the Flesh. Rom. 4. 1. Abraham, our Father as pertaining to the Flesh. Col. 3. 22. Servants obey in all things your Masters according to the Flesh.* Had now *Abraham* or *Paul's* Kinsmen, or have Masters a Divine Nature, because these

these Words, *according to the Flesh*, and *as pertaining to the Flesh*, are used of them? The Truth is, these Phrases are only as much as to say *according to the Body*; and are to signify that *Abraham* is the Father of the *Jews*, according to their Bodies, as God is the Father of their Souls or Spirits: and that the *Jews* were *Paul's* Kinsmen according to the Body, but not of Kin to him in Respect of Likeness in Faith or Manners: also that Masters are Masters over our Bodies, not of our Minds or Spirits. Therefore in the other Texts also, where Christ is said to be of the Seed of *Abraham*, of *Israel*, and of *David*, *according to the Flesh*; the meaning can only be, that as to his Body or outward Man, he descended of the House of *David*, and of the Stock of *Israel* and *Abraham*, his Soul or Spirit being from God.

(2.) Rom. 2. 16. *God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. 4. 5. *Who both will bring to light the hidden things of Darkness, and will make*

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manifest the Counsels of Hearts. Answ.

The Knowledge Christ hath, or at the last Judgment shall have of the Secrets of Hearts, is purely by Revelation from God, and the Divine Word communicated to him, Rev. 1. 1. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to shew unto his Servants.*

(3.) Rom. 10. 12. *The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*

Answ. This and what follows is spoken of God, not of Christ.

(4.) 1 Cor. 1. 2, 3. *All that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ.*

Ver. 3. Grace be to you and Peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus.

Answ. 1. As to the former of these Texts, see on Acts 9. 14, 21. For all that is there said, takes place here also. 2. But as to ver. 3. It shows plainly that Christ is not God, for it speaks of him as a distinct and different Person from God: Therefore Grace and Peace is wished to the Corinthians from God, as the Author of every good and perfect Gift; and from Christ,

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(to use the Words of Origen) as the *Procurer* by his Intercession with God.

(5.) 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost.* 2 Cor. 6. 16. *Ye are Temples of the living God.* *Answ.* The Holy Ghost or Spirit being the Inspiration and Power of God, the same Bodies that are Temples of one, must needs be Temples also of the other.

(6.) 1 Cor. 10. 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents.* It had been said before at ver. 4. *They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.* *Answ.* 1. The Rock was Christ, not really, but in Signification, it signified and prefigured Christ, for which reason 'tis called a *spiritual Rock*. So St. Austin, *contr. Advers. Leg. et Prophet.* l. 2. c. 6. This Interpretation is confirmed by Instances of like Nature, Gen. 41. 26. *The seven good Kine are seven Years, and the seven good Ears are seven Years:* that

that is, they signify and prefigure seven Years of plenty. This Rock prefigured Christ, as he is the true Rock of his People and Church: Its Waters also signified Christ, for as they were the Refreshment and Life of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness; so is Christ of the true *Israel* of God, in the howling Wilderness of this present World.

2. Whereas we are bid at *ver. 9.* not to tempt *Christ*, 'tis to be noted that the ancient and true reading of this Text is, Let us not tempt *God*. *S. Epiphanius* hath left upon record, that it was the Heretick *Marcion* who corrupted this Text, by putting *Christ* for *God* in the Copies by him published, *Epiphan. L. 1. T. 3. p. 358. Edit. Petav.* But admitting the reading in the English Bibles, yet the sense will be, Let us not tempt (that is, murmur against) *Christ*; as the *Israelites* tempted or murmured against *God* in the Wilderness. That tempting *God* and *Christ* is rightly interpreted by *murmuring against* them, appears by *Numb. 14. 27, 28, 29.*

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(7.) 1 Cor. 12. 4, 5, 6, 11. *There are Diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit ; — Differences of Administrations, but the same Lord ; — Diversities of Operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. — All these worketh that one and the same Spirit.* *Answ.*

The plain meaning is, God and his Spirit ; that is, God by his Spirit and Inspiration, worketh that great Diversity of Gifts, (Prophecy, Tongues, Healing) which were in the Christians of those times : and that though there are different Administrations (that is, Orders of Men) in the Church, yet they are all under one Lord or Head, even Christ.

(8.) 2 Cor. 8. 9. *Ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his Poverty might become rich.* *Answ.* The sense is, Such was the Favour and Love of Christ to Mankind, that in his own Person he set us an Example of Mortification and Self-denial, in his living a poor sort of Life ;
though

though 'tis certain he could have lived in the greatest Splendor, Dignity, and Plenty. He that could multiply the Loaves and Fishes, and the Wine at the Wedding of *Cana*, need not have wanted any of the Comforts of Life; if for our Sakes (that we *Gentiles* might be rich and blessed for ever) he had not chose to imploy himself in preaching, and making Disciples who might be his Agents in planting the Word of the Gospel over all the World.

(9.) 2 Cor. 12. 8, 9. *I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. — Therefore I will rather glory in my Infirmities, that the Power of Christ may rest on me.* *Ans.* He besought the Lord, that is, he besought God. The Power of Christ here is the Strength or Power which Christ procures, by his general Mediation (for all his Church, and every Member of it) with God. So the sense is, that what my Lord Christ can do and procure for me with God, may abide on me, namely Power and Strength either to overcome

come or bear this Affliction. But note that the *Socinians*, for the most part of them, do grant that *the Word* or Power of God abiding on Christ, doth qualify him both to hear our Prayers, and to succour us in all Distresses.

(10.) 2 Cor. 13. 14. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you.* *Ans.* 1. This Text demonstrates, that neither the Lord Christ, nor the Holy Spirit are God, for it plainly distinguishes them from God. 2. The sense of the whole Verse is, I wish you the continual Favour and Intercession of Christ; for you are not unknown to him, seeing the Angels (of whom he is made King and Head) signify to him your State and Condition, *Rev.* 5. 6. *Heb.* 1. 14. I wish you, as an Effect of Christ's Intercession, the Love of God or the Father: and as the Consequence of that, a plentiful Communication of God's Holy Spirit or Inspiration, together with all the Effects of it.

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(11.) Gal. i. 1, 12. *Paul an Apostle, not of Man, neither by Men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father. — I neither received it of Man, neither was I taught it, but by Revelation of Jesus Christ.* *Answ.* As we truly say the Holy Bible is the Word not of Men, but of God ; because though it was spoken and written by Men, yet it proceedeth (as to the matter of it) from the Inspiration of, and Direction from God : So *Paul* rightly denies he is made an Apostle by Man, because he was made one by Jesus Christ, who in all things acted by the Spirit and Directions of God. Briefly, *Not of Man, neither by Man* in these Verses, is only as much as to say, not by humane Authority, but by Authority from God by the Lord Christ.

(12.) Eph. 3. 9. *Who created all things by Jesus Christ.* *Answ.* Though the Words might have been rendred, *Who created all things for Jesus Christ,* (see on *Heb. i. 2.*) yet the truth is, these Words

Words, *by or for Jesus Christ*, were not originally in this Text, but added to it. For it appears by the most ancient Greek Copies, and by the Syriac and Latin, as also by several of the Fathers, that the true reading here is only thus, *Who created all things.*

(13.) Phil. 2. 5, 6, 7, 8. *Let this Mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus; who being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant. And being found in Fashion as a Man; he humbled himself and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross: Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name.* *Answ.* It cannot be the Design of the former part of these Words, to intimate that Christ is God; because 'tis at last added, that *God hath exalted him and given him a Name above every Name*; for these Words plainly distinguish Christ from God, as one who is not himself God, but *exalted by*

by God. This and other Considerations, has obliged the more judicious and learned *Trinitarians*, to interpret this whole Context of Christ, *as he is a Man*, and to translate somewhat otherways than we have done in the English. They render and interpret the Words thus ;

Ver. 5. *Let this Mind be in you, that was in Christ Jesus ; i.e. be ye humble and lowly as the Lord Christ was,*
ver. 3, 4.

Ver. 6. *Who being in the Form of God ; i.e. who being made like to God ; and namely by a Communication to him of Divine and miraculous Power over Diseases, Devils, the Grave, the Wind, the Seas, &c.*

Committed not Robbery by equalling himself to God ; i.e. did not rob God of his Honour, by arrogating to himself to be God, or equal to God.

Ver. 7. *But made himself of no Reputation ; i.e. chose a poor Life, like a Person of no Reputation or Merit.*

And

And took upon him the Form of a Servant ; i. e. became like a Servant ; possessing nothing of his own, and suffering Injuries and Reproaches without making Reply or seeking Revenge. Being a Preacher of Mortification, Humility and Self-denial, he lived up to the height of his Doctrine.

Ver. 8. Being made like other Men, in the common Similitude of Man ; he humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death ; i. e. being a Man in all respects like other Men, (Sin excepted) he always expressed a great Humility ; and notwithstanding that he could have delivered himself from them, yet was he obedient even to evil Magistrates ; and without Resistance underwent that Death, which their Wickedness and Malice prepared for him.

Ver. 9. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him. For this, as well as other causes, he is now by God advanced even above Angels ; the very Angels being put under his Directions.

(14.) Phil. 3. 21. *Who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious Body; according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.* *Ans.* See on John 6. 44. and on John 5. 19. places parallel to this.

(15.) Col. 1. 15. *The Image of the invisible God.* Heb. 1. 3. *The Express Image of his Person.* *Ans.* 1. These Texts are Demonstrations that Christ is not God; it being simply impossible, that the Image should be the very being or thing whose Image it is. 2. Those that alledge these Texts to prove that Christ is God, forget that St. Paul saith of every Man, that he is *the Image and Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 11. 7.

(16.) Col. 1. 15, 16. *The Image of the invisible God, the first-born of every Creature. For by him were all things created that are in Heaven and that are in Earth. — And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* *Ans.* 1. Christ is called the first-born of every
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Creature, not absolutely, as if he was in being before all other Creatures ; but the meaning is, he is *the first-born from the dead* of all God's Creatures. He is the first that was raised from the dead (and thus as it were born again into the World) so as never to die again, but forthwith injoy eternal Life. Thus in this very Context is *the first-born* explained, *ver. 18. He is the Head of the Body the Church, who is the Beginning, the first-born from the dead.* 2. These Words, *For by him were all things created, &c.* are not spoken of Christ, but of God. The sense of the whole Context is this, the Lord Christ is the most perfect Image of the invisible God, the first-born *from the dead* of every Creature ; for (*O Colossians*) by him, even by the invisible God, were all things created ; they were not (as some of your Philosophers have taught you) from all Eternity, nor (as others say) arose from the accidental Concourse of Atoms, but all of them (whether

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ther things in Heaven, or things in Earth; whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers) are Creatures, and were by God created, who is before them all, and by him they all consist. But he is the Head of the Body the Church, who is the Beginning and first-born from the dead, even the Lord Christ. 3. They observe farther, that the most learned and critical Interpreters of the *Trinitarians*, do not think that Creation is in this Context ascribed to Christ. They interpret this Context thus, *The most Beloved* (so first-born is used by the *Hebrews* and *Hellenists*; *Exod.* 4. 22. *Psal.* 89. 27. *Jer.* 31. 9.) *of every Creature, or the Chief and Head of every Creature.* So *Camero*, *Piscator*, *Deodat*, *Dally*, *Vorstius*, *Davenant*, *Grotius*. For by him were all things modelled, whether they be things in Heaven, or things in Earth, modelled, not created. So of the Ancients, even *Athanasius*, and *St. Cyril*, and *Fulgentius*: So also

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Alfonfus, Salmero, Arias Montanus, Grotius, and many more. The Lord Christ is said to model (or order) all things on Earth, because of the great change he introduced; abolishing Judaism and Paganism (the only Religions then in the World) and introducing Christianity in their stead. He new ordered or modelled the Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, (and other Angelick Orders) in Heaven, in that he became their Head and King (whereas they were before immediately under God) and giveth to them from time to time such Orders and Directions as to him seem good, *1 Pet. 3. 22. Rev. 1. 1. Rev. 5. 6.*

Whereas 'tis added at *ver. 17. He is before all things*: They understand it thus, he is in Worth and Excellence, as well as Dignity and Power, before all other Persons and things; *And by him all things consist; i. e.* By his wise Providence and Government they consist, or fall into no Disorder and Confusion.

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4. *St. Chrysostom* goes a way by himself. He understands indeed, *ver. 16.* of Christ, but he renders it not, for *by* him were all things created, but thus, *the most beloved of every Creature*, for *for* him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, &c. So that the sense here is the same with what is said, *Heb. 1. 2. Whom he (God) hath appointed Heir of all things; i. e.* All things were originally made with respect to Christ, that they might be subjected one day to him; and he be made Heir or Lord (under God his Father) of them.

(17.) Col. 2. 3. *In him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.*
Answ. 1. The Socinians grant, that in Christ are inestimable Treasures of Wisdom, given to him by God. But,
2. It has been observed by others, that this particular Verse and its Context should have been thus translated, to the Acknowledgment of the Mystery of God *even* the Father, and of Christ;
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in which (i. e. in which Mystery) are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.

(18.) Col. 2. 9. *In him dwelleth the Fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are compleat in him; or, ye are filled by him.*
Ans. 1. 'Tis also said, Eph. 3. 9. That ye (ye Ephesians) might be filled with all the Fulness of God. And this very Text of the Colossians saith, that the Fulness of God (or of the Godhead) is so in Christ, that we are filled by him with the same. Therefore the Fulness of God or of the Godhead here, is *the Fulness of the Knowledge of God*, or of the Godhead: this dwelt in Christ, and with this he hath filled or compleated us Christians. This Knowledge is said to dwell in Christ bodily, or (as others translate) substantially; in Opposition to that imperfect umbratile and unsincere Knowledge of God, that was to be found in the Philosophy and Philosophers of the Greeks, who in *Paul's* time were in great Esteem
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among the *Colossians* and other Greek Nations and Colonies. This Interpretation is confirmed by *ver.* 8. and allowed by the most learned and Orthodox Interpreters.

(19.) 1 Thess. 3. 11, 12. *God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct (in the Greek, prosper) our way unto you.* *Answ.* Paul wisheth that the Lord Christ may prosper his way; meaning, by his general Intercession with God for all his Ministers and other Labourers in the Gospel; as also by his Angels, who are Christ's Agents, sent forth to minister to (*i. e.* to protect and help) those that shall be Heirs of Salvation, *Heb.* 1. 14. 1 *Pet.* 3. 22. *Rev.* 1. 1. *Rev.* 5. 6. But it is added at *ver.* 12. of this third to the *Colossians*, *And the Lord make you to increase and abound in Love.* *Answ.* If these Words are to be understood of Christ; It must be said that the Lord Christ causeth us to abound in Love, and all other Graces, partly by his Gospel

spel; partly by his Intercession with him, who is the Giver of every good and perfect Gift, *Heb. 7. 25*. See also what has been said on *Acts 9. 14, 21*.

(20.) *2 Thess. 2. 16, 17*. Our Lord Jesus, —comfort your Hearts; and establish you in every good Word and Work. *Answ.* See on *1 Thess. 3. 11, 12*.

(21.) *1 Tim. 3. 16*. Without Controversy, great is the Mystery of Godliness, God was manifest in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, —believed on in the World, received up into Glory. *Answ.* It appears by the Syriac, Latin, Ethiopic, Armenian, Arabic, and most ancient *Greek* Bibles; as also by the first Council of *Nice*, and a great many Citations out of the Fathers both Greek and Latin; that the Word *God* was not originally in this Text, but added to it: For they read it thus, *Without Controversy great is the Mystery of Godliness, which was manifest by Flesh*, (that is, by Man, by the Ministry of Men, even Jesus and his

his Apostles) *justified by the Spirit ; (i. e. proved by Miracles done by the Spirit or Power of God) seen of Angels (i. e. discovered to Angels, who greatly desired to understand this Secret, and the Particulars and Causes of it, Eph. 3. 10, 11. 1 Pet. 1. 12.) believed on in the World, received with Glory ;* that is, entertained in most places with the greatest Respect and Honour, Gal. 4. 15. Note that the Gospel is here called *a Mystery*, because it was so long concealed, and so late discovered : and the *Mystery of Godliness*, from its Effect ; namely, because it disposeth Mens Minds to true Piety and Godliness. Note also that it was *Macedonius* (the 2d) *Patriarch of Constantinople*, that corrupted this Text by substitution of the word *God* instead of the word *which* ; and for this and other matters he was deposed in an Episcopal Council, and banished by the Emperor *Anastatius*, about the Year 512. But 2. Admitting the word *God* were truly

ly read in the vulgar Copies of the Greek, yet if you will make sense, you must thus translate and interpret, *great is the Mystery of Godliness, God was manifested by Flesh, (i.e. God's Nature and Will was manifested by Flesh, that is, by Man, by Jesus Christ and his Apostles, to us Gentiles) was justified by the Spirit, (i.e. the same Will and Nature of God, was verified by Miracles done by the Spirit or Power of God) was seen of Angels, (was known to the Angels, who were very desirous to understand this new Revelation) believed on in the World, received with Glory or gloriously.*

(22.) 1 Tim. 6. 14, 15, 16. *Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his time he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate; —whom no Man hath seen, nor can see. Answ.* The last Words shew, that not the Lord Christ, but God is designed in this whole Description.

(23.)

(23.) 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by Inspiration from God.* 2 Pet. 1. 21. *Holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* *Ans.* The Holy Ghost or Spirit being only the Inspiration and Power of God, it is truly said, that the Scriptures which proceeded from that Inspiration, did proceed from God ; and that those who were acted by that Inspiration, were acted by God.

(24.) Titus 2. 13. *Looking for the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* *Ans.* 1. Nothing hinders, but that we may believe that not only the Lord Christ, but God himself, will appear at the last Judgment. So that Christ is said to judg the World, because he shall pronounce the Decree and Sentence of God, and order the Angels to execute it. So several of the Fathers understood this Text. 2. But the Truth is, the Words in the Greek are thus, *Looking for the appearing of the Glory of the great*

great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Where *the Glory of the great God* is the Pomp, Power, and Angels that God, even the Father, will cause to accompany the Lord Christ on that Day. *Matth. 16. 27. The Son shall appear in the Glory of his Father, with his (the Fathers) Angels.*

(25.) Heb. 1. 2. *By whom also he made the Worlds.* *Ans.* Grotius renders the Greek thus, *For whom he made the Worlds.* The Author (saith Grotius) writing to the *Hebrews*, refers to a Maxim received among them, that the World was made for the Messias. This Translation suits well with what went before, *whom he hath appointed Heir of all things* : for what can be more agreeable, than that the World should be made for him, who is appointed Heir or Lord of it? Others render the Words thus, *By whom he made the Ages* ; understanding hereby, the Gospel-Ages, or Times.

(26.)

(26.) Heb. 1.3. *Upholding all things by the Word of his Power ; or, governing all things by his Powerful Word.*

Ans. This is to be understood of God's Word or Power ; not of Christ's, other-ways than it was communicated to him by God, and did abide on him. For the whole Context runs thus, *Who (Christ) being the Brightness of his (God's) Glory, and the express Image of his (God's) Person, and upholding (in the Greek, Governing) all things by his (God's) powerful Word.* So the sense is, Christ upholds the Government and Order of the Church both in Heaven and Earth, he governs the Angels and Spirits of Heaven, and the Church militant on Earth, by the Word (i.e. the Power) of God given to him without measure : See also on John 1. 1, &c.

(27.) Heb. 1. 5. *Thou art my Son.*

Ans. See on Psal. 2. 7. in the second Letter.

(28.) Heb. 1.6. *Again when he bring-eth the first-begotten into the World, he saith,*

saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him. Answ. See on Psal. 97. 7. in the second Letter. But as to the word First-begotten or First-born, it doth not belong to Christ only, in all the senses of it. Christ is Almighty God's first-begotten or First-born from the dead; as was said on Col. 1. 16. but in other respects others also are so called, Israel is Gods First-born, Exod. 4. 22. and David, Psal. 89. 26, 27. for this Expression in the Hebrew, signifies ordinarily, no more than the most beloved, or much beloved, as is apparent from the Texts last cited, and from Jer. 31. 9. Heb. 11. 17.

(29.) Heb. 1. 8. *Unto the Son, he saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever. Answ. In the Greek 'tis, unto the Son he saith, God is thy Throne (i. e. thy Seat, Resting-Place, and Establishment) for ever. So Grotius.*

(30.) Heb. 1. 10. *And thou Lord in the Beginning hast laid the Foundation of the Earth. Answ. See on Psal. 102.*

25. from whence these Words are taken.

(31.) Heb. 2. 14. *For as much as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself took part of the same.*

Answ. The Socinians do not deny, that the Soul of Christ took part in Flesh and Blood, that is, was incarnate; as his Children, (that is, his People) were also Partakers in Flesh and Blood.

(32.) Heb. 2. 16. *He took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the Seed of Abraham.* *Answ.* In the Greek, and in the Margin of our Bibles, 'tis, *He taketh not hold of Angels*, (i. e. he saved not from Ruin, and from utter and final falling into Perdition, the Apostate Angels) *but of the Seed of Abraham he taketh hold*; i. e. he saveth the Seed of Abraham. The Author here mentioneth only the Seed of Abraham, because this Epistle was written only to the Hebrews. Unless perhaps by the Seed of Abraham, he meaneth

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Abraham's spiritual Seed, all the faithful, all true Believers.

(33.) Heb. 3. 3, 6. *He who hath builded the House, hath more Honour than the House. — Christ as a Son over his own House, whose House are we. Answ. The House here is not Mens Bodies, but the Church of Christ; which (under God) he is truly said to build, partly by himself, partly by his Ministers.*

(34.) Heb. 4. 15, 16. *We have not an High-Priest, which cannot be touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities; but was in all points tempted as we are. — Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace. Answ. We are encouraged here to pray with Assurance and Faith to God, by this Argument or Consideration, that our High-Priest and Intercessor having been in our very Circumstances, is touched with a true Feeling of our Infirmities, and therefore doth with great Earnestness intercede for us all in general.*

(35.) Heb. 7. 3. *Without Father, without Mother, —having neither Beginning of Days, nor end of Life : but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a Priest for ever.* *Answ.* All acknowledg that these Words are spoken of *Melchizedec*. And that because neither his Father nor Mother, nor the time of his Birth or Death, are mentioned in Scripture ; he is therefore said to be without Father or Mother, and without Beginning of Days, or end of Life. But he is not herein like the Son of God (the time of whose Birth and Death is recorded in Scripture ; and whose Mother was blessed *Mary*, and his Father the everlasting God) but he is like the Son of God, in that he abideth a Priest for ever.

(36.) Heb. 10. 5. *A Body hast thou prepared for me.* *Answ.* 'Tis undoubted, that God prepared a Body for the Soul of Christ.

(37.) Heb. 11. 26. *Esteeming (i.e. Moses esteeming) the Reproach of Christ,*
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greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt. *Ans.* The sense is, *Moses* preferred being reproached and ill used by *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* (as *Christ* was reproached and abused, when he came to deliver the true *Israel* of God, from the Bondage of Sin and Satan) before all the Treasures and Riches, which he as an adopted Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, might have expected and had in *Egypt*. So *Grotius*, and others the most esteemed Interpreters.

(38.) *Heb. 13. 8. Jesus the same yesterday, today, and for ever.* *Ans.* This is prefaced to what here follows, *be not carried away with diverse and strange Doctrines*, as an Argument to perswade Constancy in the true Faith. The sense is, the Lord *Christ* and his Gospel is the same thing that it always was, be not therefore carried about to every novel Doctrine: Ye will by Experience find, that 'tis a good thing to be establish'd in the Grace of the Gos-

spel ; and not in Doctrines about Meats, which the *Jews* from the Mosaic Law, and the *Gentiles* from the Dictates of their Philosophers, so much urge.

(39.) 1 Pet. 1. 11. *Searching what, and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before-hand the Sufferings of Christ.* *Answ.* 1. The Spirit of Christ, that is, the same *Spirit of Prophecy* that was in Christ. Or 2. The Prophetick Spirit in them *which spoke of Christ.* So *Grotius* interprets here. Others confirm his Interpretation by observing, that *the Spirit of Truth*, and *the Spirit of Error* mentioned, 1 John 4. 6. are those Spirits which speak the Truth, and teach Error. So we call *Virgil* the Poet of *Eneas*, and *Homer* of *Achilles* and *Ulysses*, because they have written and spoken of *Eneas*, *Achilles* and *Ulysses*.

(40.) 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20. *Quickned by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached to the Spirits in Prison, which some-*

sometimes were disobedient, —in the days of Noah. *Ans.* This Text seems to speak of Christ's descent into Hell. The sense is, Christ being dead, was shortly quickned, or brought to Life again by the Spirit or Power of God : by which also (that is, by assistance of which Spirit) he preached and spoke to the Spirits imprisoned in Hell, who would not harken to Noah who in his Life-time preached Righteousness to them, 2 Pet. 2. 5. *Cardinal Bellarmine* has quoted above thirty of the Fathers, who interpret this Text after this manner. The Interpretation seems confirmed by 1 Pet. 4. 6. *For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead.* For that he speaketh of the real dead, appears by the foregoing verse.

(41.) 1 John 1. 1, &c. *That which was from the Beginning, —which we have seen with our Eyes, —of the Word of Life, —declare we unto you,* *Ans.* The Word of Life here is the Gospel.

The sense is, we declare or preach to you that Gospel or Word of Life, which from the Beginning *was in the Mind and Decree of the Father.* So St. John explains himself in these Words at ver. 3. *That eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us.* He calleth the Word of Life, eternal Life; as 'tis the ordinary and appointed means and way to eternal Life. He saith, he had *heard* it, and *seen* it with his Eyes, and *handled* it with his Hands; to signify by these Expressions, that it was fully, certainly, and perfectly known to him. For the Hebrews use to express full and certain Knowledge of things, by Words and Phrases borrowed from the senses.

(42.) 1 John 3. 16. *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us.* *Ans.* Neither the Syriac, nor almost any Greek Copy of the Bible, hath the Word *God* in this Text. The true reading is, hereby perceive we *his* Love, because he
(Christ)

(Christ) laid down his Life for us.

2. Admitting the reading in the English Bible, yet *he* in this Text is not God; but Christ *the Son of God*, who was mentioned *ver. 8.* So *Grotius*. And the Interpretation is certain, for God cannot lay down his Life.

(43.) 1 John 4. 3. *Every Spirit that confesseth not, that Christ is come in the Flesh, is not of God.* *Ans.* This saying, *is come in the Flesh*, (or in Flesh, for so 'tis in the Greek) is opposed to those false Prophets and Teachers, that affirmed Christ had not a real Body of Flesh and Blood; but a spiritual; and consequently was not a true Man, nor the Off-spring of *David*. On the contrary *St. John* here teaches that Christ *is come in Flesh*, or in the Flesh; that is, was clothed with a real Body of real Flesh.

(44.) 1 John 5. 7. *There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one.* *Ans.* 1. This verse was

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not

not originally in the Bible, but has been added to it. 'Tis not found in the most ancient Copies of the Greek, nor in the *Syriac*, or *Arabick*; or *Ethiopic*, or *Armenian* Bibles, nor in the most ancient Latin Bibles. 'Tis not acknowledged by the Fathers, who treated professedly of this Question of the Trinity; 'tis wholly rejected by abundance of the most learned Criticks and Interpreters, and by all acknowledged to be doubtful and uncertain. 2. Admitting this verse to be genuine, yet the most learned *Trinitarians* confess the sense is, not *these three are one God*, but *these three are one in their Testimony*, or they agree in their Testimony; for they are here considered and spoken of as Witnesses. So *Beza*, *Vatablus*, *Calvin*, *Erasmus*, the English-Geneva Notes. And accordingly most of the Greek Bibles which have this verse in them, read here as they do in the next verse (not *these three are one*; but) *these three agree in one*; *i. e.* in one and

and the same Testimony.

(45.) 1 John 5.20. *We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ: This is the true God.* *Answ.* This was a very negligent Translation, say the Socinians. For whether you interpret *him that is true* to be God, or to be Christ, no sense can be made of the Words. The latter part of the Text ought to have been thus rendred, *We are in him that is true (i. e. in God) by his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God; i. e. He whose Son Christ is, and in whom we are, he and no other is the true God.* So that this Text plainly denies that Christ is the true God. When we are said to be *in God by Christ*; the meaning is, we are united to God (by his Love to us, and ours again to him) by the Procurement and means of the Lord Christ, who hath by his Gospel revealed God
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to us, and by the highest Arguments engaged us to love and serve him.

(46.) Rev. 1. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, —saith the Lord, which is, and which was, &c.* *Answ.* This verse speaks of God only, not of Christ: for at ver. 4. and 5. Christ is distinguished from him, *which is, and which was.*

(47.) Rev. 1. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.* *Answ.* 1. This part of the verse is not in the Latin, nor in any good Greek Bible. 2. But admitting the Words, it has been said on *Isai.* 44. 6. in the second Letter, in what sense these terms may be used of the Lord Christ.

(48.) Rev. 1. 17. *I am the first and the last.* *Answ.* See on *Isai.* 44. 6.

(49.) Rev. 2. 23. *I am he, which searcheth the Reins and Heart.* Every one knows this is an Hebrew and Scripture Phrase, signifying, *I know the*
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the most secret Thoughts, which is a Property belonging only to God.

Answ. The Knowledg which the Lord Christ had or hath, of any ones secret Thoughts, is a Revelation made to him by God; as it was also sometimes to former Prophets: *Rev. 1. 1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to shew unto his Servants. 2 Kings 6. 12. The Prophet that is in Israel, telleth the King of Israel, the Words that thou speakest in thy Bedchamber. 2 Kings 8. 12. I know the Evil that thou wilt do to the Children of Israel. Prophets search the Heart, that is, know the Thoughts and Propensions of the Heart, by the Spirit or Inspiration of God in them. But the Lord Christ hath a far greater measure of that Spirit, than any of the former Prophets ever had.*

(50.) Rev. 3. 14. The Beginning of the Creation of God. Answ. 1. These Words prove that Christ is not God, but a Creature. 2. But the Truth is, the

the Greek should have been thus rendered, The Prince (or chief) of the Creation of God.

(51.) Rev. 5. 5. *The Root of David.* *Ans.* That is, a Root springing from *David*: As a Root of the Earth, is a Root which springeth from the Earth; not on the contrary, a Root from which the Earth springeth.

(52.) Rev. 5. 6. *I beheld, in the midst of the Throne. — a Lamb (as it had been slain) having. — seven Eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the Earth.* *Ans.* This Text confirms what has been often said, namely that the Knowledg which our Lord Christ now hath of Affairs on Earth, is (partly) by means of those ministring Spirits which are sent forth into all the Earth, *as his Eyes*, to see and relate the state of things: for what other reason can they be here called his Eyes?

(53.) Rev. 5. 8. *Having every one of them, — Vials full of Odors, which*
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are the Prayers of the Saints. *Answ.* In this Vision the Prayers of the Saints are by the Elders (or Presbyters) offered to Christ, as the Mediator; that is, with Intention that he should recommend them to God by his Intercession. But note also, that 'tis not here said that these Prayers were at all offer'd to Christ.

(54.) Rev. 17. 4. *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.* *Answ.* Christ is so Lord of Lords; as that himself hath one, who is not only his Lord but his God. *John 20. 17. I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.*

(55.) Rev. 21. 6. *I am Alpha and Omega.* *Answ.* These Words are spoken by and of God only.

(56.) Rev. 22. 20. *Even so, come Lord Jesus.* *Answ.* 'Tis a Wish, not a Prayer.

(57.) Rev. 22. 21. *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.* *Answ.* In what sense the Grace or Favour of Christ

Christ is *wisdom* to Christians, hath been explained on 1 Cor. 1. 2. and on 2 Cor. 13. 14.

Besides these Answers to particular Texts, the Socinians say farther in general to all the Quotations out of the New Testament: that,

1. Whereas they differ from the Church in translating *several*, and in interpreting *all* the before-cited Texts; their Translations and Interpretations ought to be admitted, and those of the Church or *Trinitarians* rejected, because that Interpretation of Scripture can never be true, which holds forth either a Doctrine or a Consequence that is absurd, or contradictory and impossible. Is it not (say they) manifestly contradictory and impossible, that there should be three Almighty and most wise Persons, and yet but one God; when nothing can be more certain or evident, than that every Almighty and most wise Person is a God, a most perfect God, to whom

whom nothing can be added? Is it not doubly contradictory and absurd to say, there are three Persons who are *severally and each of them* the true and *most high* God, and yet there is but one true and most high God? Unless you mean one thing by a *true and most high* God, in the first clause, and another thing in the other clause: and if so, you introduce *two sorts* of true and *most high* Gods; which I think all Christians abhor.

We reject the Doctrine of the *Anthropomorphites* (that God hath humane Parts and Passions) though grounded, if you regard only the sound of the Words, on a great many clear Texts of Scripture, as may be seen in Mr. Biddles Catechism; *because 'tis absurd and impossible*, that he who has humane Parts and Passions, and resides in Heaven only, should create and preserve the World, and should be conscious to Mens Thoughts on Earth. What can be more ex-
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press than *this is my Body*, yet we justly reject the Doctrine of the Transubstantiation, *because 'tis contradictory and impossible* that the same Body should at the same time be in more places than one. Therefore any other Doctrine, that plainly appears to be absurd and contradictory, ought also to be rejected; how agreeable soever it may seem to *the meer Chime and Jingle of the Words* of some few Texts: We are (as *Tertullian* rightly saith) to interpret Scripture, not by the sound of Words, but the Nature of things: *Malo (saith the Father) te ad sensum rei, quam ad sonum vocabuli exerceas. Tertul. adv. Prax. c. 3.*

2. They say farther, that none of the objected and above-cited Texts, are by *Trinitarians* themselves thought to be true and demonstrative Proofs either of the Trinity, or of the Divinity of the Son or Spirit. Every one of these Texts, but *John 1. 1, &c.* is

is given up to the *Socinians*, as an incompetent and unconcluding Proof, by some or other of the most learned and allowed Criticks and Interpreters of the *Protestant Party*. As to the *Catholick Doctors* (so called) *Chr. Sandius* hath made a great Collection of Testimonies out of them, to this Effect, that neither the Trinity, nor the Divinity of the Lord Christ, or of the Holy Spirit, can be proved by the Scripture; but by Tradition only. Some of them confess that the Scriptures rather favour the Socinian Doctrine; and that the Trinity is not only above, but contrary to Reason; finally that if the Authority of the Church did not oblige them to be Catholicks, they should choose to be *Socinians*. See for these things: *Sandius, Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. de Ario* and *Cingallus, in Script. Trin. Revel.* An English Author of the Romish Persuasion has these Words (*in Fiat. Lux. p. 379, 380.*) I may truly say, *Christ is the Pope's God*. For if the Pope had

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not been, or had not been so *vigilant and resolute* a Pastor as he is; (he means *such a Persecutor*) Christ, whom the Pope both worships himself, and propounds to the World to worship *as the very true God, that made all things*, Christ I say had not been taken for any such Person, as this day we believe him to be.

Whereas besides the above-cited Texts, the Orthodox object, that if Christ were not God as well as Man, he could not satisfy the Justice of God for our Sins, or be a full and sufficient Atonement for them: The *Socinians* answer, (1.) That the Lord Christ is a Propitiation and Atonement for Sin, is a Demonstration that he is not God, for God doth not give or make, but receive the Satisfaction for our Sins. (2.) They wonder that the Son of God, though he is a Man only, should not be judged a sufficient Satisfaction and Propitiation for Sin, (through the gracious Acceptance of God) when 'tis so known and evident,

dent, that the Oblation and Sacrifice of *Beasts* under the Mosaic Law, and from *Adam* till those times, was accepted as a full Atonement and Satisfaction *in order to Forgiveness*; Lev. 6. 6. *He shall bring his Trespass-Offering, a Ram without Blemish; —and the Priest shall make Atonement for him before the Lord, for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing. See the whole Context.*

Finally, whereas the Orthodox do decline many of the Socinian Arguments, by the Distinction of two Natures (a Divine and humane Nature) in Christ: For Example, when the Socinians object, *John 14. 28. My Father is greater than I: or, John 5. 30. I can do nothing of my self.* We answer, that these things are spoken of Christ only according to his humane Nature; but that he hath also a Divine Nature, by which he is equal to the Father, and can do all things of himself. To this they reply, (1.) That the Distinction of two Natures (a

Divine and Humane) in Christ, is clearly overthrown by the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th Arguments mentioned in the the first Letter. 2. If a thing other-ways true of Christ, may be denied of him, because 'tis only in one of these (pretended) Natures, and not in the other; if our Saviour saith he can do nothing of himself, only because he can do nothing of himself according to his humane Nature, and can do all things of himself according to his (pretended) Divine Nature; then 'tis lawful and allowable to say, Christ is no Man, was never born of the Virgin, was not crucified, dead, or buried, did not rise again from the dead, ascended not into Heaven, under pretence that according to his Divine Nature, he never was born of the Virgin, never was crucified, dead, or buried, &c. Now who does not see, that to speak thus, were to deny the whole New Testament, and renounce Christianity? Have not we (say the Socinians) reason to reject and
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abhor a Distinction, that if it incommodes our Doctrine, and the Allegations for it, does as effectually fight against the most evident and acknowledg'd Points of the Christian Faith? Nay the Distinction and Evasions founded on it, do at least as much hurt to the *Trinitarians* as to the *Socinians*. For if the Distinction of two Natures be true; and the Answers founded on it allowable; then no Fault can be found with a *Socinian*, when he shall say, Christ is not true God, was not generated of the Essence of the Father, was not from Eternity: for all this may be said of him *according* (to use their own Words) *his humane Nature*; for according to that, he is not true God, was not generated of the Fathers Essence, was not from Eternity. Do not *Trinitarians* absolutely disallow, as false and Heretical, these Forms of Speech, though defended by the Distinction of the two Natures? why then do they expect, that their Adversaries

ries in this Controversy, should admit their Answers which are founded on the same, and no other Defence?

This, Sir, is the Sum of what these Gentlemen say on this great Question; a Brief of their Arguments and Answers, by which they would support their Doctrine, that God is but one Person; and that (as some of them add) our Lord Christ nor the Holy Spirit, neither are, *nor ever are called Gods or God* in Holy Scripture, as also that neither Creation (whether New or Old) nor any of the Attributes of God are ascribed to our Blessed Saviour. For a Conclusion, give me leave to advise you in the Words of St. Paul, 1 Theff. 5. 21. *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.*

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Your most Obliged.

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The Publisher to whom the foregoing Letters were written, having left them some time with a Gentleman, a Person of excellent Learning and Worth; they were returned to him with this following Letter.

S I R,

HAVING had the Favour of perusing these Letters, I cannot but greatly esteem the Learning and Judgment of the Author; who has brought so large a Controversy (and that has been debated with the utmost Industry, Learning, and Subtilty for many hundred Years, even from soon after the time of the Apostles) into so small a Compass, that one may soon see the Allegations from Scripture on both sides, with the most material Distinctions and Answers. Wherein it seems obvious to me, what

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is said in one of the Paragraphs of the first Letter, that the *Unitarian* Doctrine is an accountable and reasonable Faith, grounded on clear and evident Scripture-Arguments, so far as a negative Proposition can reasonably be expected to be : Whereas the *Trinitarian* Doctrine is founded upon obscure or mistaken Texts ; and defended by such unreasonable Distinctions, as cannot be admitted by any Man of a free Judgment, being either contradictory in themselves, or utterly unintelligible. However I can do no less than conclude, and expect every judicious Man's Assent to it ; 1. That the Doctrine of the *Trinitarians* is no necessary or fundamental Doctrine of Christianity. 2. That 'tis unjust and unchristian, to lay the *Unitarians* or *Socinians* under any Penalties or Forfeitures, upon the account of their Doctrine. 3. That *Trinitarians* ought to own the *Unitarians* for Christian Brethren, and behave themselves towards them as such.

First,

First, I said the Doctrine of the *Trinitarians* is no necessary or fundamental Doctrine of Christianity. For to say, it is, doth, 1. Reflect upon the Goodness of God, and his Love to Mankind : as making that fundamental and necessary to Salvation, the Truth whereof must be confessed to be so very obscure and uncertain, that where the Prejudices of Education, Respect of Men, and Fear of Penalties do not prevail, the vulgar (who are ten to one of Mankind) either do not believe it at all, or confess it as Parrots speak Words without Understanding, 2. To make the Doctrine of the Trinity fundamental, is to joyn Hands with Papists in contradiction to Protestant Doctrine ; owning with them that the Scriptures are obscure and insufficient even in Fundamentals : and so bringing in a necessity of admitting and believing unscriptural Traditions. Of this the Papists are so sensible, that it is the chief of those Arguments with which they attack Protestants ; and which they

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urge in their former and latter Writings: wherein they not only seem to have, but have in reality great Advantage; as will (I am perswaded) appear to those that impartially consider it. It will not be here impertinent to tell you a story that hapned in the present Reign. A certain great Lord was assaulted in his Faith by a Jesuit or other Seminary, who began with him thus; *My Lord, I know you believe the Creed of Athanasius*: to which the Lord (wisely perceiving what he would build upon that Concession) answer'd, *Who told you so?* which quick Answer by Question, did so surprize and disappoint the Seminary, that he had no more to say. It seems his intended Arguments leaned on that Pillar alone, to wit, the Belief of the Creed commonly called the *Athanasian*. 3. The *Trinitarian* Doctrine reflects Weakness and Unsufficiency upon the whole Christian Church and Faith of the first Ages; which (as our Author has noted) knew or professed no other but the Apostles Creed, which doth

doth fully agree with the *Unitarian* or *Socinian*, but by no means with the *Trinitarian* Doctrine of fundamental Faith. 4. They that urge the Doctrine of the Trinity *as fundamental*, do clearly impugn the sixth Article of the Church of *England*, which saith, “ Holy Scripture containeth all things
 “ necessary to Salvation: So that what-
 “ soever is not read therein, nor may
 “ be proved thereby, is not to be re-
 “ quired of any Man, that it should be
 “ believed as an Article of the Faith. Such also was the Judgment of Mr. *Chillingworth*, that eminent Defender of Protestantism, *ch. 6. n. 56.* where he saith, “ By the Religion of Protestants,
 “ I understand —that wherein they all
 “ agree. —*THE BIBLE, THE*
 “ *BIBLE*, I say, *THE BIBLE* on-
 “ ly is the Religion of Protestants.
 “ Whatever else they believe besides it,
 “ and the *plain irrefragable and indubi-*
 “ *table* Consequences of it, well may
 “ they hold it as a matter of Opinion;
 “ but not as a matter of Faith or Reli-
 “ gion :

" gion ; neither can they with Con-
 " sistence to their own Grounds, be-
 " lieve it themselves ; nor require the
 " Belief of it from others, without
 " most high and most scismatical Pre-
 " sumption.

Secondly, I said, it follows from the foregoing Discourses, that it is unjust and unchristian, to lay the *Unitarians* or *Socinians* under any Penal Laws or other Hardships, on the account of their Conscience and Doctrine. For we may see here, that an honest and sincere Man may in the Pursuit of his own Salvation, and in adhering to Protestant Principles of the Clearness and Sufficiency of Scripture in Fundamentals, as also in reverence of the ancient Faith held forth in the Apostolick Creed, and of the Church of the first Ages, he may (I say) with clear Satisfaction in his own Conscience, disbelieve the *Trinitarian* Doctrine. But how can Christians with Satisfaction to their Consciences punish such a Man ? As for the publick Peace, there is

is not only nothing in the Nature of their Doctrine that inclines them to Unpeaceableness ; but they have also always been extremely candid to those that differ from them, from a Principle common (I think) to them and the Remonstrants only, that *Conscience ought to be free in matters of Faith* : This is a Principle with the *Socinians* and the Remonstrants ; other Families of Christians take it up as an expedient, when they have need of it. Briefly, If the *Socinians* appear to be as careful and diligent to know the Truth, as *Athanasians* ; if they are in their Stations as learned as they, and as innocent and virtuous Men in their Conversations ; how can any Christian judg and condemn them, without incurring our Saviour's Judgment and Condemnation ? He that believes the whole Bible heartily ; and indeavours sincerely to know the Mind of God and Christ therein, and to purge himself from those carnal Affections and worldly Interests that hinder Men from seeing and obeying the

the Truth ; and (perhaps) as a Testimony thereof, suffers the Loss of Advantages, and Goods, Kinsfolk, and Country, nay, undergoes Penury and other Hardships in foreign Countries, as many do at this Day ; how can any who pretend to give Obedience to the Law of common Reason, of *Moses* and the Prophets, and of Christ himself in his Sermon on the Mount, to wit, of doing to others as we would they should do to us, how I say can such think a *Socinian* so qualified as we have but now described him, doth deserve Punishment for his Faith ? And how can any Man, without transgressing Christ's Law of Charity, judge such a one to be guilty without any Appearance of Guilt, more than may be easily seen in himself ? Is it not the common Principle of all Protestants, to believe the Holy Scriptures are sufficient to all Religion, and clear in all Necessaries of Faith and Manners, and that every Man is obliged by our Lord Christ, to believe and practise according to his own Knowledg, Light and Under-

Understanding of the Scriptures? He that does so, is not only a Christian, but a Protestant, that is, a reformed Christian. *I am fully assured* (says Mr. *Chillingworth*, and consequently those learned Persons, the Vice-Chancellor of *Oxford*, the Regius Professor, and others who licensed and approved his Book) *that God does not, and therefore Men ought not, require more of any Man than this, to believe the Scripture to be God's Word, to endeavour to find the true sense of it, and to live according to it,* ch. 6. n. 56. The same Author says (ch. 5. n. 96.) *I have learnt from the ancient Fathers, that nothing is more against Religion, than to force Religion: and of St. Paul, that the Weapons of the Christian Warfare are not carnal. The famous Salvian of Marseils (who wrote about the Year of our Lord 460) saith thus concerning one sort of Unitarians, viz. Arians, They are Hereticks, but not knowingly: — They do so much judge themselves Catholics, that they defame us with the Name of Hereticks: — They err,*
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but with a good Mind; not of Hatred, but of the Love of God. — How they shall be punish'd in the Day of Judgment for this Error of a false Opinion, none can know but the Judge. *De Gubern. Dei. l. 5.* where may be read more to the same purpose. Though this Author, according to the Vogue of Those times, calleth the *Arians* Hereticks; yet that which he says farther of them, shows they were not so: for the Character he gives of them, shows them to be conscientious Christians; and Lovers of God. *St. Austin* against the *Manichees* (a sort of People that held there were two Gods, one good, the other evil) saith thus, *Let them be fierce against you, who know not how laborious a thing it is to find out the Truth; and how difficultly we escape Errors: Let them be fierce against you, who know not how rare and hard a thing it is to overcome carnal Imaginations by the Serenity of a pious Mind, &c. Contr. Ep. Faust.*

Thirdly, I added, that the *Trinitarians* ought to own the *Unitarians* for Christi-

Christian Brethren, and to behave themselves towards them as such. For Protestants do agree, that all necessary and fundamental matters of Faith are clear and plain in Scripture; but other matters not so evident, but that good Christians may err concerning them, as we see they did even in the times of the Apostles: now this Doctrine of the *Trinitarians* appearing to be no fundamental Doctrine, it does by no means unchristian those that hold the contrary, nor excuse the *Trinitarians* from those Offices, which are due to them as Christians. And the rather, because they are not only willing to make Confession of Faith in all the forms of Words contained in the Holy Scripture, but in the Words also of the Apostles Creed; as also because they are not liable to any charge of Idolatry, or Superstition in their Worship; or of Uncharitableness in condemning those of contrary Minds, as the Confederacy of *Rome* is.

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Therefore I cannot but wonder at some learned Men, that are so far carried away with an overweaning Opinion of their own Judgment, that they will not allow those the name of Christians who do not believe, besides the Bible, and the Creed of the Apostles, also the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds. Nay, some account the Trinitarian Doctrines to be so necessary to Christianity, that *though those who deny them be otherwise very pious and useful Men, yet going against the sense of the Catholick Church, they err, not for want of Instruction, but from a certain Wantonness and Pride of Understanding, and are guilty of such unpardonable Immodesty as admits of no Excuse.* If what is hinted in these Letters, concerning the Catholick Church of the Apostles times and first Ages, be true; then that Author builds his Condemnation upon a false and rotten Foundation, and the Building falling, impresses, Rashness, and Uncharitableness upon him-

himself; I mean as to this particular Case, For otherways I readily acknowledge the Worth and Learning of the Author.

Neither can I sufficiently admire, that another learned Man, and a Sufferer for his Conscience, should in a *Pacifick Discourse* treat the *Socinians* in the same contumelious manner, nor allowing them worthy of the Name of Christians, because they go about (saith he) to overthrow the whole frame of the Christian Doctrine, by arrogant Presumptions of false Reasonings and Sophistical Arguments. Yea, it is commonly objected against them, that they exalt their Reasonings above plain and express Revelation in Scripture. Which Crimination seems to me, to be clearly taken away by the four Letters, in which it appears, by the many Unconcluding Texts, false Translations, unintelligible Reasonings and Distinctions, cited and urged on the Behalf of the *Trinitarian Doctrine*; and (on the

other hand, by the numerous clear Texts, allowed Translations, Reasonings and Distinctions, common to Mankind, produced by the *Unitarians*; that these last may reasonably retort this great Objection, on their Opposites the *Trinitarians*, who in a thousand express Texts of Scripture do exalt their Reasonings to maintain another sense than the plain Words require. For one Instance, how many express Texts ascribe Parts and Members, Affections and Passions, Shape and Figure, Place and Circumscription to God? all which (as the Author of these Letters notes) are otherways expounded by learned Men, because they judg these things in reason unsuitable to God. But what Principle more clear both in Reason and Scripture than this, that there is but one God, or that God is one? All Christians, and all *Jews*, and all *Mahometans* (who are said to be more in Number than Christians) besides the wise Heathens, do
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acknowledg it: and all these understand by the term *God*, a necessary existent Person. Upon these clear Grounds the *Unitarians* deny that there are three such, as contrary to that Unity; and introducing into the Godhead two unnecessary or superfluous Persons. For if one be sufficient, and he cannot be God if he be not sufficient, then the two more are supernumerary and unnecessary, and consequently not God. For my own part I was bred up in the *Trinitarian* Faith, and took the Truth of it for granted; but when these Scriptures and Reasons came into my View, (and I had got over the Fear of examining, what some Men who name themselves the Church, call Fundamentals.) I could not avoid the Force of them: though it grieves me that I cannot continue in consent with my old Friends, as well in this as other parts of Christian Doctrine. But certainly as in Philosophy, Truth should be more dear to us than *Plato* or *Socrates*

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tes; so in Theology, the Testimony of plain Scripture agreeing with evident Reason, should prevail with those who believe the Scriptures Divine, more than obscure Texts dissonant to the clear Reason of Mankind. And it may well allay any ones Fear of examining and judging concerning (pretended) Fundamentals, when he shall consider that even the Church of England in another of her Articles says, that as the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred, so also the Church of Rome (which contends that she is the Catholick Church) hath erred, not only in her living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matter of Faith. So also Chillingworth (with his Approvers) says, I see plainly and with mine own Eyes, that there are Popes against Popes, Councils against Councils, some Fathers against others, the same Fathers against themselves, a consent of Fathers of one Age, against a consent of Fathers of another Age. ————— There is

is no sufficient Certainty but in the Scripture only, for any considering Man to build upon. As to the boast of their Numbers, 'tis well known there was a time when the Christian World was *Arian*, that is *Unitarian*; so that the Council of *Ariminum* and *Seleucia* in which 560 Bishops were present (the greatest Convention of Bishops that ever was) decreed for the *Unitarian* Faith. Was number in those times an Argument of Truth? If not, how can it be so now?

The Author of these Letters has well observed besides, that the Doctrine of the *Trinitarians* in these days, is widely different from the Doctrine decreed in the first Council of *Nice*; from whence I infer, that their Boast of Antiquity is as vain as the other of Number. I will only add to this Observation, that though the more ancient and the modern *Trinitarians* may agree in terms, yet those times and these have different senses of the same Words and Phrases.

S I R,

SIR, I pray accept of my hearty
Thanks for this Publication, and shew
the Author how great an Honour I
have for him.

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Yours, &c.

28-MR-59

F I N I S.



